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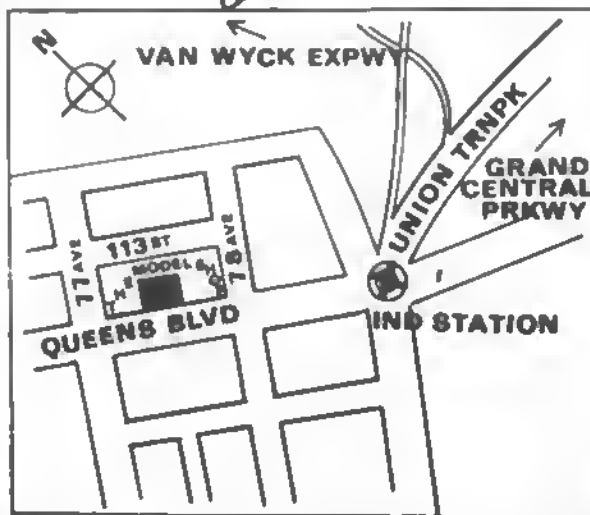
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**A MAGAZINE FOR ARMOR ENTHUSIASTS**  
**Volume 3 Number 6**



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**COVER:** The crew of a British Humber Mark II. armoured car on reconnaissance in the Western Desert spotting the enemy through the desert haze. See page 4 for an in-depth look at British armoured car operations during "Crusader". Our cover scratch-board drawing is by Al Clemens.

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The AFV-G2 is a magazine, published monthly, for Armor Enthusiasts, with the purpose of gathering and disseminating information about Armored Fighting Vehicles and their employment; to provide an opportunity for persons seriously interested in the History of Armored Fighting Vehicles, in the modeling of these AFV's and associated equipment, and in the playing of military Wargames utilizing miniature AFV's, to share ideas and items of mutual interest, and to promote an interest and awareness in the subject of AFV's.

The AFV-G2 is available, with an individual issue price of \$.60, from local Hobby Shops, Magazine and Book Dealers, or from the Publisher. Subscriptions in the United States, Canada and Mexico are \$6.00 yearly. All other foreign subscriptions (that involve "overseas" mail) are \$7.00 (yearly), with foreign sample copies priced at \$.70. Checks should be made payable to the "AFV-G2" or to Baron Publishing Company, and forwarded to the Circulation Director: Mr. John Yonos, Post Office Box 293, La Puente, California 91747. In the United Kingdom contact: Greening, Knoll Cottage, Knoll Road, Dorking, Surrey.

AFV-G2 is printed in the United States, mailed in Los Angeles, California and sent as "third class" mail to those subscribers living in the United States. To those subscribers living outside of the territorial boundaries of the United States, AFV-G2 is sent as "printed matter".

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# "Swanning" Into the Blue!

## British Armoured Car Operations during "Crusader"

by William E. Platz



It was raining in the desert. A cold, steady downpour that drove everyone for the shelter of their vehicles - everyone who had vehicles to shelter in, that is. To the north, along the coast the clouds were revealed by intermittent flashes and a distant rumbling hung in the sodden air. The storm or the gunners - no one knew the source for certain, and no one cared. As the darkness in the east melted, the regiment formed itself into the familiar patrol formations and moved-off into the west. It was November 18th, 1941, and once again the 11th Hussars "Prince Albert's Own" were leading a British Army into Cyrenaica.

The "Wire", that familiar monument to Italian folly, was behind them now, as the 11th deployed on a wide front to screen the advance. The desert here was flat. Here and there a shallow sheet of water left from the storm marked a treacherous mud hole, and low camelthorn bushes dotted an almost featureless landscape. Yet, the "desert haze" kept visibility limited to a 1000 yards at ground level, while providing a deceptively clear panoramic view. The 11th Hussars were a veteran unit and knew the tricks of the trade. Moreover, their new Mark II. Humbers were a great improvement over their recently discarded Marmon-Herrington armoured cars. The 15mm Besa M.G. at last gave them an effective weapon, except for its annoying habit of jamming at the most inoperative time.

Now, as troops of armoured cars scurried hither and yon across the flat desert, there was a feeling of confidence in the Army. The 11th Hussars were part of the southernmost arm of a three pronged armoured drive, screening the main body of the 22nd Armoured Brigade which was equipped with 158 new Crusader tanks. Further to the north were 7th Armoured Brigade (screened by 4th South African Armoured Car Regiment) and 4th Armoured Brigade (with the King's Dragoon Guards providing the covering force of armoured cars). The plan was to engage the Axis armour in a major tank battle, destroy it, and then proceed to the relief of Tobruk, followed by the expulsion of the Axis forces from Cyrenaica.

"C" Squadron of the 11th Hussars was moving forward when word came back that one of the leading troops was having difficulties with their guns, and needed help. The background whisper of static from the wireless was drowned in crackling of almost recognizable words, and off went Lt. Pat Stewart's troop to render aid.

The three helpless Humbers were soon located, but then both rescuers and rescued came under fire from a battery of unseen guns. A roar of engines, and the armoured cars scattered, moving fast across the flat. Sand and rock geysers appeared among the darting Humbers, but no hits were scored. Out of the haze a clump of black dots appeared and slowly resolved themselves into the shape of vehicles.....nine, ten, eleven. Friend or foe? Stewart closed in. A 2cm shell screeched overhead, answering his question and initiating another wild ride across country in

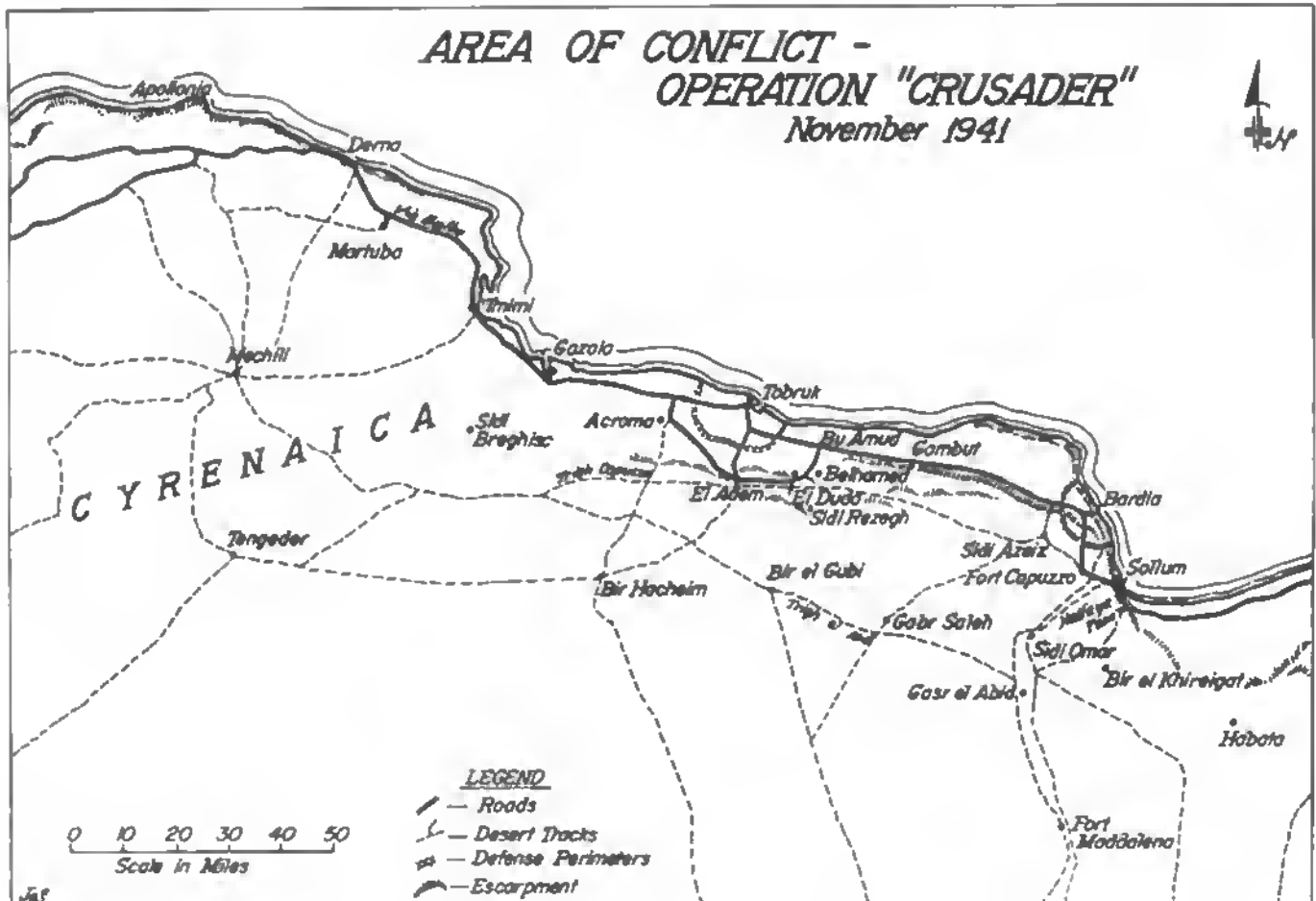
search of a ridge of sand or a slight depression - anything that would provide some cover. Dodging right and left with the turret traversing to face the new threat, Stewart clung to the hatch ring with one hand while operating the wireless microphone with the other. The gunner madly cranked the gun hand wheel to bring his weapons to bear. On target! The 15mm stuttered, filling the floor of the fighting compartment with brass cartridge cases. A jam! That damned 15mm. . . . A few moments frantic effort and the stoppage is cleared. The car is now hull-down and firing rapidly. Cordite fumes filled the turret. Then it was over. The Germans, probably from Aufklärungs-Abteilung 33. (Reconnaissance Btl. 33) withdrew.



A Troop of South African armoured cars on patrol west of the "Wire", and looking for trouble.

Meanwhile, 22nd Armoured Brigade was lagging behind. The 22nd was new to the desert, having just arrived as the leading element of 1st Armoured Division. Additionally, their new "Crusader" tanks were having their teething troubles. Mechanical breakdowns and inexperience turned a mid-morning replenishment into a lengthy delay. To the armoured car screen, however, this respite meant the chance for an afternoon "brew-up" of tea.

At sunset, groups of vehicles gathered together into columns and moved off to the leaguer areas. A dark mass of storm clouds held the last glimmer of sunlight over the western horizon. It was going to be another wet night.



Wednesday, November 19, 1941. So far, the British advance had been unopposed, except for the few light units of the two German reconnaissance battalions. As a matter of fact, the Axis command was not even aware of the magnitude of the 65-mile deep penetration into their lines. This situation could not last much longer. The night before, while Pat Stewart was towing his Humber out of a mud hole, General Cunningham of Eighth Army had conferred with the XXX Corps commander and his staff, and he had decided to split his armoured forces. He would send 22nd Armoured Brigade on to Bir el Gubi, while the 7th Armoured Brigade moved northwest to the Sidi Rezegh airfield, and 4th Armoured Brigade maintained contact with the infantry of XIII Corps.

An hour before first light, the sentries woke those who had managed to grab an hour's sleep. Engines sputtered into life, and the familiar sounds of breaking leaguer filled the pre-dawn stillness. By sunrise, Major William Wainman was leading "B Squadron" of the 11th Hussars towards the day's objective. Bir el Gubi is the name of a map reference marked by an ancient cistern and the junction of two desert tracks. Its importance, however, was due to its position on the inland route to the airfields and the road junctions of El Adem. It was a key point in the Axis defense, and on November 19th, it was held by the Italian 132. Divisione Corazzata "Ariete".

At about 1500 hours, a number of black dots appeared on the horizon, and the 11th Hussars moved forward to investigate. Hugging each fold of the ground, the Humbers inched closer. Italian M-13/40 medium tanks! The word was passed back to Brigadier Scott-Cockburn, and the Brigade deployed for attack - two Regiments forward and one in reserve. Wainman, however, urged caution. Behind what was little more than a company of enemy tanks, there was a prepared position; lorries and gun pits dotted the desert. But the advice was ignored. The armoured cars drew off and the

Crusaders swept-in to the attack - into the guns of 132. Reggimento Artigliera and 8. Reggimento Bersaglieri. At 1630 hours, the British disengaged, leaving some 20 tank hulks on the field, and having lost another 60 tanks damaged or broken-down; not all-together a successful attack.

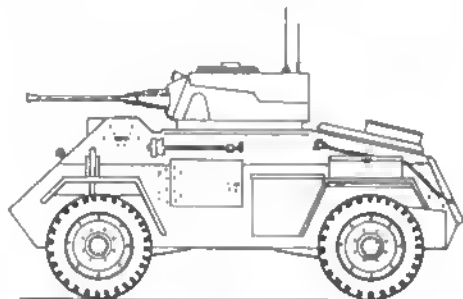
That night, the British armour encamped in four widely separated groups - the 22nd Armoured Brigade outside Bir el Gubi, 7th Support Group midway between Gabr Saleh and Sidi Rezegh, 7th Armoured Brigade on the Sidi Rezegh airfield, and 4th Armoured Brigade southeast of Gabr Saleh. The next morning the armoured cars again set out to establish an "observation line".

Tuesday the 20th was a relatively quiet day for the 11th Hussars. Patrols continued with a relentless monotony, enlivened only by a passing yellow-nosed Messerschmidt, or the sudden appearance of a convoy of unidentified transport. Meanwhile, further to the north, their colleagues of the King's Dragoon Guards were engaged in more active pursuits.

Kampfgruppe Knabe of the 21. Panzer-Division assembled near Gasr el Arid, and moved off to rendezvous with Oberstleutnant (Lt. Col.) Stephan's Panzer-Regiment 5, at Sidi Omar. The battle group consisted of the II. and III. Abteilungen of Panzer-Grenadier-Regiment 104, and their route of advance was between that of 15. Panzer-Division along the Trigh Cappuzo and their own armoured units along the Trigh el Abd. At 0830 hours, however, the column was stopped by a mass of armored vehicles near Gabr Menfia. Radios crackled and soon 15. Panzer-Division was alerted to come to their assistance. General Cruwell, commanding the Afrikakorps, arrived on the scene and determined the "30 tanks" holding up Kampfgruppe Knabe were actually nothing more than the armoured car screen of the K. D. G. By the time the two columns of 21. Panzer-Division met at noon, the German tanks were out of fuel, and the division was stranded for the rest of the day. Not a bad day's work for two Squadrons of Marmon-Herrington armoured cars.

The two German Panzer-Divisionen began November 21st in close proximity to each other, near Gabr Saleh. Both had been ordered to move on the Sidi Rezegh airfields and they moved off at 0400 hours. As the Panzers disappeared into the dawn, they were spotted by an 11th Hussar patrol. At 0745 hours, 4th South African Armoured Car Regiment reported the German's approach to the airfield. The South Africans, commanded by Lt. Col. Newton-King, were still equipped with Marmon-Herrington Mark. II's, a thoroughly inadequate vehicle for anything other than observation duties. Never-the-less, "C Squadron" moved in.

The long lines of soft-skinned transport filled the eastern horizon, moving northeast. The German armor was at the head of the advance, moving fast for Sidi Rezegh. It was a golden opportunity. The Marmon-Herringtons deployed and dashed across the open desert - Bren guns chattering



*Humber Armoured Car Mk. II  
11th Hussars, November 1941*

Confusion broke among the enemy column as the drivers swung away from the new threat. Then, from somewhere in the mass of vehicles an AT gun barked, followed by a stream of tracers from light Flak. Outgunned and out-ranged, the South Africans fired a parting burst and scurried for cover. The German column continued northwards accompanied by their South African shadows - now at a discreet distance. "C" Squadron was to get revenge, though. Later that afternoon, the Squadron spotted Panzer-Regiment 8, refueling. Undaunted by the mass of armor and a hail of fire from German artillery, two troops closed in and began to take a tally of the Panzers. Such effrontery evoked an immediate response. 25 tanks detached themselves and advanced against the six armoured cars. The South Africans dodged back among the sandridges and camelthorn, followed by the tanks. As the Panzers closed in, the crest of a nearby ridge erupted, as the ancient Cruisers of 2nd Royal Tank Regiment opened fire at the Germans' exposed flank. The British tankers had been lying in wait, hull-down, and within moments, 5 German vehicles were burning and 6 others had been holed at least once.



Marmon-Herrington Mark II, armoured cars of the 11th Hussars prior to November 1941.

November 22nd was to be a day of reckoning at Sidi Rezegh airfield. In the early afternoon, 21. Panzer-Division opened an attack from the west. But the British armour had also concentrated at the airfield. While the Humbers of "C" Squadron, 11th Hussars, watched from the escarpment, five British regiments charged the Panzers in succession. Shaken and short of ammunition, 21. Panzer-Division was stopped and withdrew.

After the battle for the airfield, command and control of the armoured car screen disintegrated. Individual troops and cars fought their own actions while widely scattered over the desert. During the night, Headquarters of the 4th Armoured Brigade was overrun by a detachment from 15. Panzer-Division, and the Brigade staff was captured or dispersed.

An icy wind whipped stinging particles of sand through the early morning air. It was bitterly cold. So began the last Sunday of November - Totensonntag, the Day of the Dead. "C" Squadron of the 11th Hussars had withdrawn with the 7th Armoured Division Support Group to a position south of the airfield the night before. Now they were parked in a great mass of transport that covered several square miles of desert. Suddenly, a column of German armor burst upon the escarpment. This was 15. Panzer-Division, moving to join "Ariete" Division, and now presented with an easy prey in the form of several acres of relatively helpless transport. The mass of armor broke into two waves sweeping past the Humbers of the 11th Hussars and making for the transport and workshop lorries that filled the western horizon. Soft-skinned vehicles scattered in all directions. Then, out of the chaos emerged the bulky shape of an Armoured Command Vehicle with a small figure perched on top waving red and blue bandanas at the passing transport and calling orders to every combat unit he could find. That comic figure was Brigadier "Jock" Campbell, and with a dozen tanks, a few guns and "C" Squadron, 11th Hussars, he launched a series of counterthrusts against the German columns. Campbell was awarded the Victoria Cross for his leadership, and the Germans paid dearly for their success. At the end of the day, Panzer-Grenadier-Regiment 115, was commanded by Leutnant (or 2nd Lieutenant) Rudolf Struckmann, who was to earn the Ritterkreuz for his part in the action. After the mad scramble, 15. Panzer-Division disengaged, and after refueling moved south to join the Italians. It was now 1130 hours.

By 1500 hours, the Axis were back again; this time with all three armored divisions (15. and 21. Panzer-Divisionen and "Ariete") attacking from the south. Once again, scattered groups of British tanks and armoured cars darted among the attackers while a hail of fire poured from the artillery and anti-tank guns. Vehicles were dashing in all directions. The 5th South African Infantry Brigade was overrun. In this operation, though, the tank strength of the D. A. K. was cut from 162 to 90 operational vehicles; and the 11th Hussars suffered more casualties than on any other single

- Continued on Page 28 -



## HISTORY and LINEAGE

# The U.S. 1st Cavalry

by Capt. Lee D. MacMahan

### DISTINCTIVE INSIGNIA: REGIMENTAL CREST

An eight-pointed star TENNÉ surrounded with a sword belt SABLE, buckled at base with a belt plate of the Dragoons of 1836, PROPER, overall on a wreath of the Colors TENNÉ and OR, a Hawk rising with wings addorsed and elevated SABLE, langued and membered CULES with

the motto 'ANIMO ET FIDE' (Courageous and Faithful) centered on the top portion of the sword belt.

### SYMBOLISM:

The Regiment was organized in 1833 as the Regiment of United States Dragoons; many of its officers and men had served in the Battalion of Mounted Rangers that had taken part in the Blackhawk War, shown on the Crest. The Color of the Dragoons was orange, as indicated by the coloring of the eight-pointed star, which was the insignia of the Dragoons until 1851 (shown as "shading" in the drawing of the Crest above).

### LINEAGE:

### GENERAL.

The Regiment was constituted 2 March 1833 into the Regular Army as the United States Regiment of Dragoons, organized 4 March 1833 at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. On 15 May 1836, the Regiment was redesignated as the 1st Regiment of Dragoons. It was reorganized on 3 August 1861 as the 1st Regiment of Cavalry. In the period December 1917 to May 1918, the Regiment was assigned to the 15th Cavalry Division. It was reorganized as an element of the 1st Cavalry Division 20 August 1921. On 16 January 1933, it was redesignated and equipped as the 1st Cavalry Regiment (Mechanized). Redesignated 15 July 1940 as the 1st Armored Regiment (Light) and assigned to the 1st Armored Division which was stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

### HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS TROOP

Reorganized and redesignated 20 July 1944 as the 1st Tank Battalion and remained assigned to the 1st Armored Division. Converted 1 May 1946 to the 1st Constabulary Squadron, 15th Constabulary Regiment. Inactivated on 20 December 1948 in Germany. Activated on 7 March 1951 as the 1st Medium Tank Battalion, 1st Armored Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. Inactivated (less Company A) 15 February 1957 at Fort Polk, Louisiana and relieved from assignment. 1st and 2nd Battalions were redesignated as the 1st and 100th Tank Battalions and consolidated and redesignated under the Combat Arms Regimental System (CARS) as 1st Cavalry, Company A redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop for the 1st Cavalry Regiment (CARS).

### 1ST SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY

(1st Armored Division, U.S. Army)

Reorganized on 1 May 1946 as Troop A, 1st Constabulary Squadron. Concurrently relieved from assignment to 1st Armored Division, and assigned to the 15th Constabulary Regiment. Deactivated on 20 December 1948 in Germany. Activated on 7 March 1951 at Fort Hood, Texas as Company A, 1st Medium Tank Battalion. Reorganized 15 February 1957 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Medium Tank Battalion (Patton), 1st Cavalry. The unit was assigned to the 1st Armored Division. On 3 February 1962, the unit was redesignated as 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry.

### 2ND SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY

(2nd Armored Division, U.S. Army)

Reorganized on 15 July 1940 as Company B, 1st Armored Regiment, an element of the 1st Armored Division. On 20 July 1944, the unit was redesignated as Company B, 1st Tank Battalion. In the postwar period, the unit was redesignated and served in the 15th Constabulary Regiment. Inactivated 20 December 1948 in Germany. On 7 March 1951, the unit was activated as Company B,



1st Tank Battalion, at Fort Hood, Texas. On 20 May 1953, the designation was changed to Company B, 1st Medium Tank Battalion. On 1 October 1957, the company was again redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Medium Tank Battalion (Patton), 1st Cavalry Regiment and assigned to the 3rd Armored Division. Redesignated as 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry on 1 July 1963 and relieved from the 3rd Armored Division, being transferred to the 2nd Armored Division.

3RD SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY (1st Armored Division, U.S. Army)

Reorganized 15 July 1940 as Company C, 1st Armored Regiment, an element of the 1st Armored Division. Redesignated on 20 July 1944 as Company C, 1st Tank Battalion. In the postwar period, reorganized and assigned to the 15th Constabulary Regiment. Inactivated 20 December 1948 in Germany. On 7 March 1951, the unit was activated at Fort Hood, Texas and assigned to 1st Armored Division. Redesignated on 20 May 1953 as Company D, 1st Medium Tank Battalion, subsequently changed to include the designation (Patton) of the 1st Cavalry. On 22 November 1965, the unit was redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry, stationed at Fort Hood, Texas with the 1st Armored Division.

4TH SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY (U.S. Military Academy, West Point)

Activated 15 July 1940 as Company D, 1st Armored Regiment, an element of the 1st Armored Division at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Disbanded on 20 July 1944 at Bolgheri, Italy. Reconstituted on 27 February 1951 in the Regular Army and redesignated as Company A, 100th Tank Battalion, an element of the 1st Armored Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. Redesignated on 15 May 1958 as the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Medium Tank Battalion (Patton) and assigned to the United States Military Academy at West Point, N. Y. On 29 December 1966, the unit was redesignated as the 4th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment of the U. S. Army.

TROOP "E", 1ST CAVALRY (11th Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army)

Reorganized 15 July 1940 as Company E, 1st Armored Regiment, an element of the 1st Armored Division. Disbanded 20 July 1944 at Bolgheri, Italy. Reactivated on 27 February 1951 into the Regular Army and assigned as Company B, 100th Tank Battalion, an element of the 1st Armored Division. Redesignated on 15 April 1966 as Troop E, 1st Cavalry Regiment and assigned to the 11th Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army in Hawaii.

6TH SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY (2nd Armored Division, U.S. Army)

Reorganized and redesignated on 15 July 1940 as Company F, 1st Armored Regiment, an element of the 1st Armored Division. Disbanded 20 July 1944 near Bolgheri, Italy. Reactivated on 27 February 1951 as Company C, 100th Tank Battalion, an element of 1st Armored Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. On 15 February 1957, the unit was inactivated at Fort Polk, Louisiana and relieved from assignment. Reorganized 19 June 1967 as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, assigned to the 2nd Armored Division at Fort Hood, Texas.

7TH SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY (Regular Army, Non-Divisional)

Reorganized 15 July 1940 as Company G, 1st Armored Regiment, an element of the 1st Armored Division. Disbanded 20 July 1944 in Italy, and reconstituted on 28 March 1967 in the Regular Army, and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 7th Squadron, 1st Cavalry assigned to Fort Knox, Kentucky.

8TH SQUADRON, 1ST CAVALRY (Regular Army, Non-Divisional)

Reorganized and redesignated on 20 August 1921 as Headquarters Troop, 1st Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. Inactivated on 25 March 1949 in Japan, and relieved from assignment to 1st Cavalry Division. Converted and redesignated 20 May 1949 as Headquarters Troop, 1st Constabulary Brigade, and activated at Dotzheim, Germany. Inactivated on 15 August 1951 in Germany, and subsequently disbanded on 5 December 1951. Reconstituted in the Regular Army on 10 May 1967 as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 8th Squadron, 1st Cavalry at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The units indicated at the beginning of each paragraph in all capital letters are current units in the U.S. Army. In this article, the author has attempted to trace the history of all of the units that today comprise the 1st Cavalry Regiment of the U. S. Army.

# "THE MODELING OF THE 'WESPE'!"

BY FJ. "RICK" TYSON

THIS IS THE FIRST OF THREE ARTICLES DEALING WITH SELF-PROPELLED GUNS BASED ON PANZER KAMPFWAGEN II (Sd.Kfz. 121) CHASSIS. IN THIS ARTICLE WE ARE DEALING WITH CONVERTING THE TAMIYA 1/35 SCALE Pz. KpFw F/G INTO A DETAILED 10.5 cm Pz. FH 18/2 AuF Pz. KpFw II (SF)-WESPE-Sd. Kfz 124.

THE MATERIALS YOU NEED ARE: ONE (1) KIT, ONE (1) PACKAGE OF SQUADRON SHOP SHEET STYRENE, ONE (1) H&R MG 42, AND THESE BOOKS: BELLONA PRINT NO. 5 AND AFV PROFILE NO. 15; ALL AVAILABLE AT ANY SQUADRON SHOP.

THE "WESPE" CONSISTS OF THE 10.5 cm LIGHT FIELD HOWITZER MOUNTED ON THE PANZER II CHASSIS, MODELS A-C WITH FIVE BOGIE WHEELS. ITS ROAD PERFORMANCE IS SIMILAR TO THE TANK. THE VEHICLE WEIGHED 12 TONS, LENGTH 15' 9", WIDTH 7' 4", HEIGHT 7' 10-1/2" AND ITS RANGE 125 MILES (ROADS) AND 70 MILES (CROSS-COUNTRY). ALL OTHER SPECIFICATIONS FOLLOW THAT OF THE Pz KpFw II.

THE GUN IS THE 10.5 cm L.F.H. 18M WITH MUZZLE BRAKE. IT IS MOUNTED AT THE REAR OF THE CHASSIS WITHIN AN OPEN TOP BOX TYPE SHIELD WHICH IS 10 mm THICK, ITS MUZZLE BRAKE BEING ALMOST FLUSH WITH THE FRONT OF THE CHASSIS. ITS RECUPERATOR AND BUFFER MECHANISMS, MOUNTED ON THE BOTTOM AND TOP OF THE BARREL, EXTEND BEYOND THE GUN SHIELD. OVERLAPPING THE GUN SHIELD (SEE ISOMETRIC VIEW) AND SLOPING BACK TO THE REAR OF THE GUN COMPARTMENT ARE THE SIDE PLATES ALSO 10 mm THICK. TARPS ARE USED TO COVER THE GUN COMPARTMENT DURING RAINY WEATHER.

THE GUN'S ELEVATION IS -5 deg. TO +42 deg. AND TRAVERSE OF 32 deg. OFF CENTER EITHER LEFT OR RIGHT, THE RANGE AVERAGES 11,550 FEET. THE GUN IN THE CONVERSION IS MADE UP FROM REVELL'S 90 mm SCORPION KIT AND PARTS FROM THE SCRAPBOX.

UPON OPENING THE BOX, TAKE NOTE OF PARTS NO. 4, 5, 5, B, B, 10, 11, 13, 14, 22, 23, 31, 32, 40, 43, 4S, AND 4B PLUS THE LOWER HULL, TRACKS AND MEN WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED IN YOUR CONVERSION. NOW LET'S LOOK AT YOUR TEMPLATES PRINTED HERE ON THESE PAGES, PLACE YOUR PROFILE PLANS NEXT TO THEM AND RELATE TO VEHICLE VIEWS TO GET YOUR ASSEMBLY STEPS FIRMLY PLANTED IN YOUR MIND. NOTE THE 5 MAJOR STEPS - A, B, C, D, AND E AND THE PARTS THAT GO WITH EACH STEP. STEP A SHOULD BE .30 SHEETS (ALL PARTS); STEP B SHOULD BE .20 SHEET (ALL PARTS), STEP C-C2 SHOULD BE .40 SHEET WITH C1 SHOULD BE .10 SHEET, STEP D SHOULD BE .20 SHEET, AND FINALLY STEP E SHOULD BE .40 SHEET STYRENE.

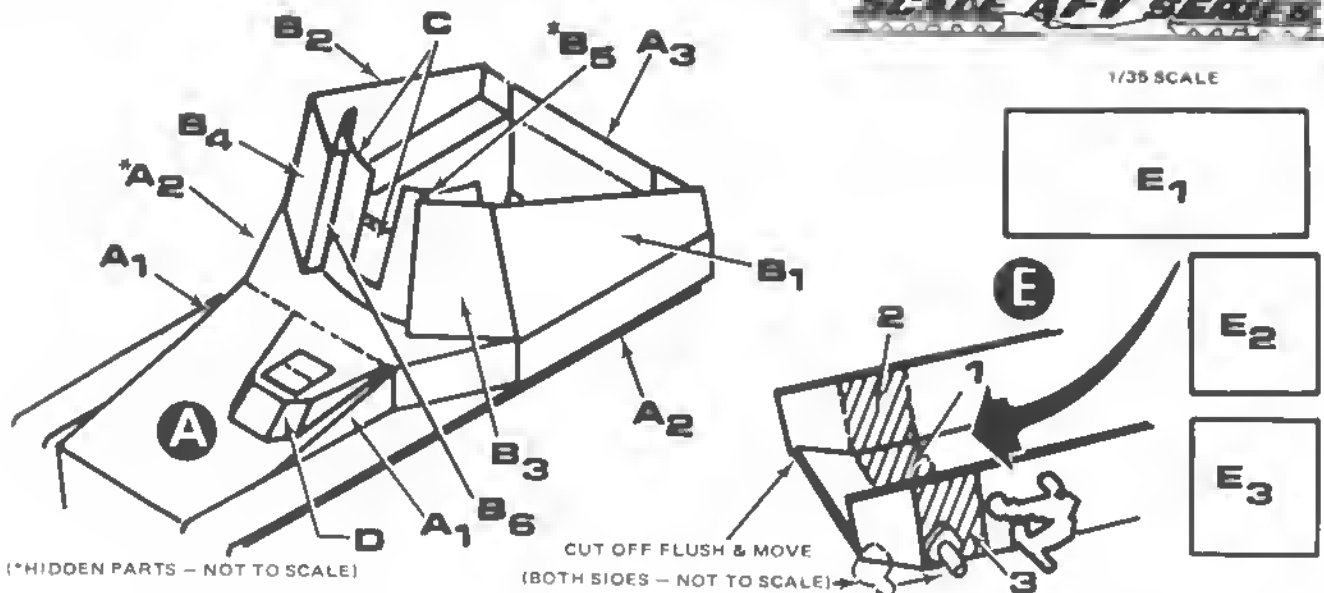
NOTE: TRANSFER OR CARBON PAPER SHOULD BE USED WITH 3H PENCIL TO BE USED TO TRANSFER LINES TO SHEET STYRENE PLACED UNDERNEATH PAGES. USE NO. 11 XACTO BLADE TO CUT AND/OR SCORE ALL CUT AND/OR BEND LINES. CAUTION: USE STRAIGHT EDGE ON ALL CUT LINES AND ALL BEND LINES TO ENSURE ACCURACY IN MODEL. USE TESTOR'S BOTTLE GLUE FOR ALL SHEET STYRENE JOINTS IN CONVERSION ASSEMBLY.

(NOTE: DON'T FORGET THE (4) FOUR GRILLS ON THE SUB-STRUCTURE.)

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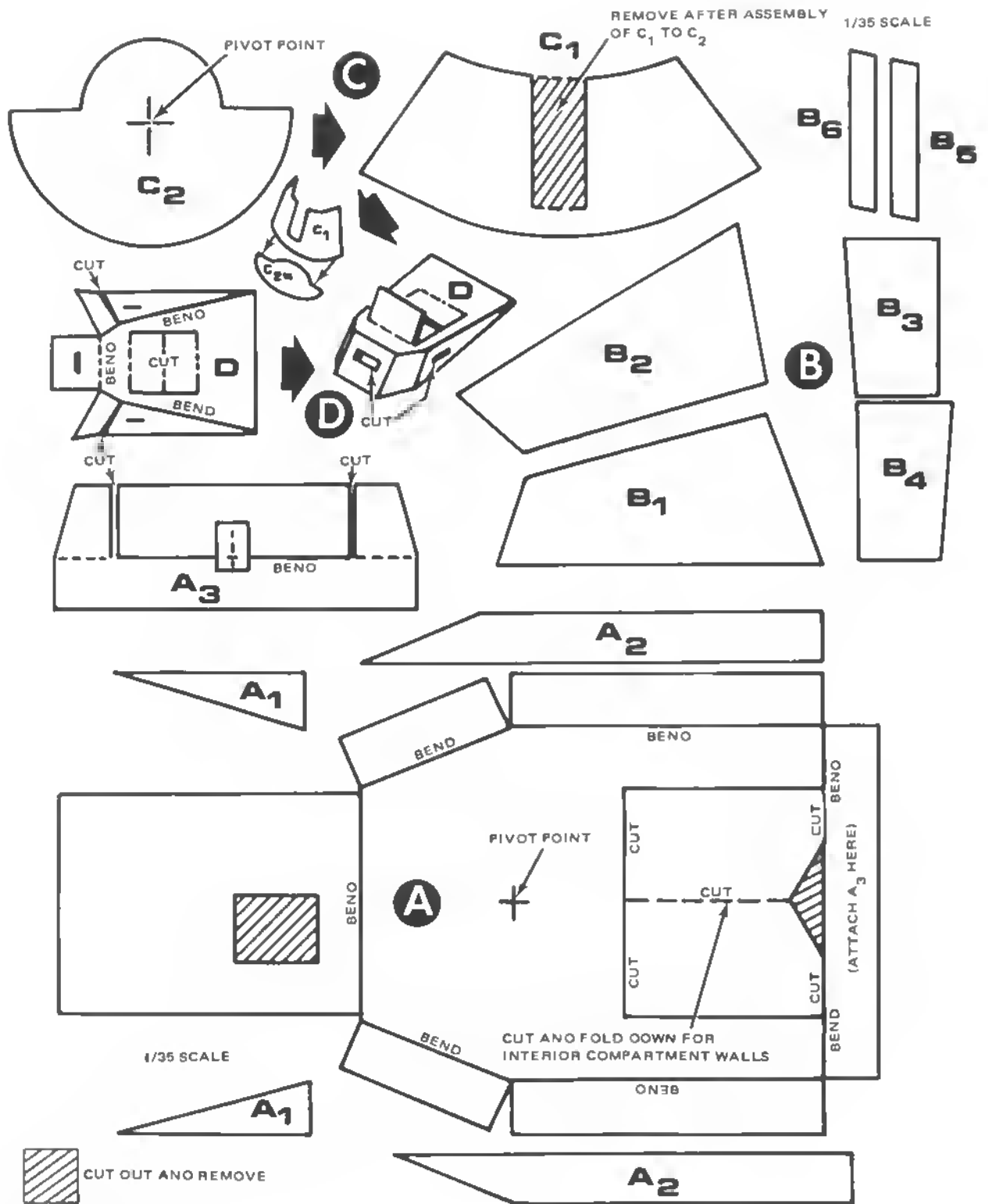


1/35 SCALE



(\*HIDDEN PARTS - NOT TO SCALE)

CUT OFF FLUSH & MOVE  
(BOTH SIDES - NOT TO SCALE)



REFERENCES:

- 1 BELLONA MILITARY VEHICLE PRINT NO. 5
- 2 BELLONA HANDBOOK 1 WEAPONS ON GERMAN TRACKED CHASSIS
- 3 AFV PROFILE NO. 15 PANZERKAMPFWAGEN 1 & 11
- 4 GERMAN TANK AND ANTITANK by WE, INC.
- 5 GERMAN COMBAT WEAPONS VOL. 1 by WE, INC.
- 6 GERMAN TANKS OF WORLD WAR II by UNO ETTERLIN
- 7 ARMOR - CAMOUFLAGE & MARKINGS '40-'43 by BRAOFORO

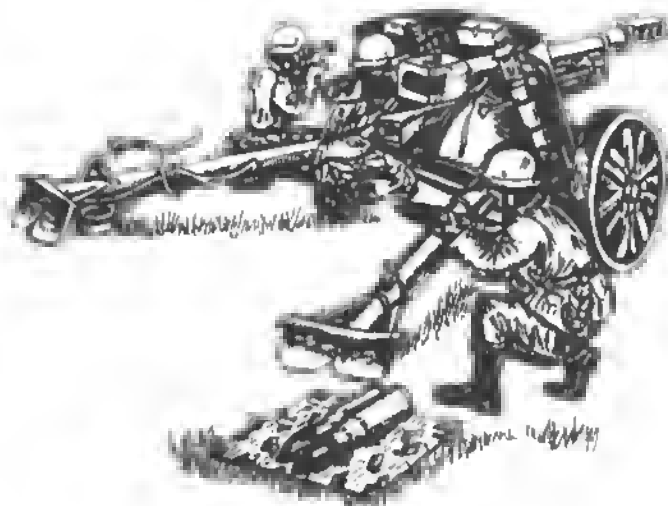
# The DEFENSE of

# SICILY BY

## The 15. Panzer- Grenadier- Division

### Part Two

by James Steuard



By the end of June 1943, German troops on the island of Sicily were generally well prepared for the expected Allied invasion, in spite of the somewhat confusing command structure that had been imposed upon them. Nominally, they were under the direct command of the Italian Sixth Army, which was commanded by General Guzzoni, an elderly (66 year old) general who had been recalled from retirement to take this command. General Guzzoni was aided by a German general who had been provided as a liaison officer between Feldmarschall Kesselring's command headquarters near Rome and the Sixth Army; this was Generalleutnant Fridolin von Senger und Etterlin, a pro-Italian who was trusted and liked by Guzzoni. However, to complicate matters, both the 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division and the Hermann Göring Panzer-Division (which had begun to arrive on Sicily in mid-June) were assigned to the XIV. Panzer-Korps which was stationed in southern Italy and commanded by General der Panzertruppen Hans Hube. To be sure, this assignment was for "administration and training", but who knew for sure where administration actually stopped? To further complicate matters, Feldmarschall Kesselring was very inclined to become directly involved in tactical orders, sometimes to the consternation of his subordinates and the Italians.

Generals Guzzoni and von Senger und Etterlin were essentially in agreement that the Italian Coastal Divisions were not capable of making more than a token defense of the beaches. They were able to reach agreement that the two German divisions would be held in grouped reserve positions to form a powerful coordinated counterattack force. These units would be used to launch heavy attacks against the Allied landings, after the location of the invasion had become clear. Thus, the Coastal Divisions and the four regular Italian field divisions were to buy time, while the German counterattack was being prepared. When launched, the German force would inflict heavy casualties on the enemy, forcing the Allies to give up the invasion. In retrospect, this seems to be a most logical and practical plan of defense; General Guzzoni actually picked the exact locations where the U.S. divisions were to land, and he had ordered General Rodt, the commander of the 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division to undertake anti-invasion exercises in these areas. Thus, near the end of June, the Germans were ready, and time would only improve the situation.

Feldmarschall Kesselring, the commanding general of all German troops in Italy, however, was worried about a possible landing in the poorly defended western end of the island. Kesselring differed from Guzzoni and Senger und Etterlin in his concept of the island defense. He believed that all divisions should be concentrated fairly closely behind the suspected invasion beaches, where immediate assaults could be launched against the unprepared invaders quickly, before they were able to prepare a defense. In this manner, the Allied divisions were to be pushed back into the sea before they could become established or intrenched on the beaches. During a command visit to the

island in late June, Kesselring ordered General von Senger und Etterlin to persuade Guzzoni to move the 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division to the western part of Sicily to counter the landings which would certainly take place there. After listening to the arguments, General Guzzoni agreed, and the elements of the division near the center of the island were alerted for movement. The divisional headquarters and Kampfgruppe Fullriede were to move to the vicinity of Caltafirma (some 30 miles southwest of Palermo)(refer to the map in Part I.) to reinforce the two Italian field divisions that were stationed there. The major combat elements of 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division were thus ordered to leave the central area where it had trained; in fact, this move now left the island's center weakly defended with Italian Coastal Divisions, and it put wear on the division's motorized equipment, as well as leaving the troops tired and ill-prepared to counter the Allied landings, which took place just after the German units had arrived in their new locations!

On July 10th, 1943, the U.S. Seventh Army and the British Eighth Army poured seven combat divisions ashore on Sicily. While the British landed in the Augusta-Syracuse area, the Americans disembarked three divisions (the 1st, 3rd and 45th Infantry Divisions) ashore at Licata and Gela, on the southern coast of the island. As the first reports of the landings reached General Guzzoni, he realized the serious mistake that had been made in sending the German unit west. Recognizing the urgent need for the return of the 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division, he ordered General Rodt to turn his tired units around, and have them retrace their paths back to the vicinity of Canicatti-Caltinissetta-San Cataldo (see the small map below).

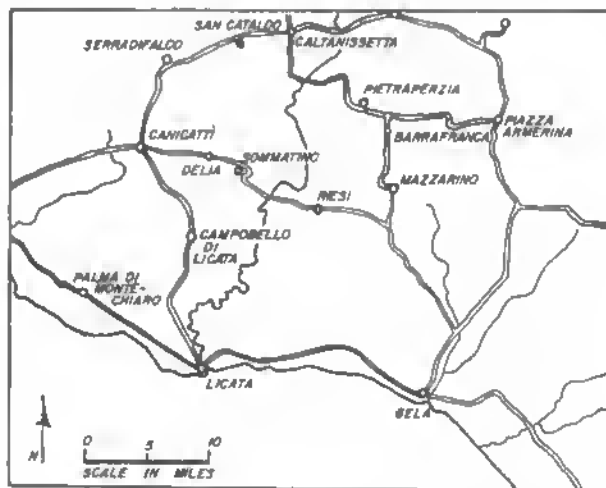
Allied aerial reconnaissance had already spotted the westward movement of the division, and the new dispositions had been reported to Seventh Army Intelligence. Now, A-36 fighter-bomber pilots were looking for German units, using every opportunity to slow or hinder the division's progress, as the German units began to return to the combat area. The excellent march discipline of the 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division now paid-off, as small, well-camouflaged, motorized units evaded aerial observation, and moved as quickly as possible under the circumstances, along roads with which they were already familiar.

General Rodt had received almost no orders or intelligence on July 10th, but he was able to learn from fleeing Italian coastal units that the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division had landed ashore at Licata, and that it was starting to drive inland, generally astride the road leading from Licata to Campobello di Licata. Lacking specific directions, and not knowing what Italian units would be on his flank, General Rodt decided to establish a blocking position so as to hinder or stop the advance of the American units. By 0400 hours, 11 July, after continuous travel, Rodt established his new headquarters at Pietraperzia, some 20 miles northeast of Campobello, and he learned more details of the American drive towards Campobello and Canicatti. He immediately ordered his units, which were now arriving, to make contact with any Italian defensive forces, and to assist in establishing a defensive line under Italian control. Unfortunately, it was difficult to correctly estimate the situation, and few Italians could be found that were determined to resist.

The first elements of the 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division to see combat were the companies of Kampfgruppe Neapel, the highly mobile armored battle group of the division. General Rodt had learned that a battalion of the Italian 177th Bersaglieri Regiment (designated as Gruppo Venturi, apparently after the name of its commander) was attempting to stop the advance of the U.S. 15th Regimental Combat Team (15th RCT), the lead elements of the 3rd Infantry Division. He now dispatched Kampfgruppe Neapel to assist this Italian force, with the intent of counterattacking to retake Licata, operating under orders from the Italian XII. Corps. However, German intelligence and Italian timing were not in coordination for this attack, and the German battle group found nothing but retreating Italians instead of the powerful, elite Bersaglieri battalion waiting to launch an attack. The Italian Gruppo Venturi had already made contact with the 15th

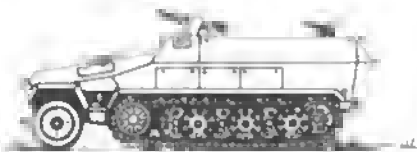


TACTICAL SYMBOL:  
15. Panzer-Grenadier-  
Division



Regimental Combat Team, and they had been badly hurt by the encounter. Kampfgruppe Neapel was forced to defend Campobello, while the battered Italian units retreated through their positions. Although threatened by American tanks, which were outflanking Campobello to the west, the Germans skillfully prepared a defensive position designed to purchase time, supported by Italian artillery and 7.5cm Pak 40 anti-tank guns of Schnelle-Abteilung 15. At 1500 hours, the U.S. forces laid-down a heavy artillery preparation (which did little damage to the Germans, but destroyed the town), and they launched a two battalion attack on Campobello. Concentrated German fire forced the end of this attack, and American artillery continued to batter Campobello for another hour, while the last Italians and Germans left the town. When the artillery fire was lifted at 1600 hours, the U.S. Army infantry occupied the town, as the last German machine gun teams pulled-out.

General Guzzoni, by the evening of 11 July, had realized that he lacked sufficient forces to counterattack to drive the Allies back into the sea. He ordered General Schreiber, the Italian commander of the 207th Coastal Division to retreat through German defensive lines, and he ordered the German units to hinder and slow the American advance by every means they could employ. By this time, the German units (Kampfgruppe Ens and Kampfgruppe Fullriede) were positioning themselves per General Rodt's orders. Oberst Karl Ens, although wounded, had remained in command of his battle group, and he placed one of his battalions at Barrafranca, a second battalion at Piazzara Armerina and the third battalion at Pietraperzia as a reserve. These units were rapidly digging-in, and were engaged in laying minefields and preparing demolitions. Kampfgruppe Fullriede was busy preparing main defensive positions north of Canicatti, and outposts were established for flank protection, with companies stationed at Delia and Sommatino. All through the evening and night of 11-12 July, Italian units retreated through the German "lines", unhindered by American units.



*Sd.Kfz. 251 Armored Halftrack  
of 1./Schnelle-Abt. 15, 'Kampf-  
gruppe Neapel'*

At 1300 hours, 12 July, tank-infantry forces from Combat Command "A", 2nd Armored Division (consisting of elements of the 66th Armored Regiment and the 41st Armored Infantry Regiment) attacked towards the southern outskirts of Canicatti; after a heavy artillery preparation on the undefended town. As the last artillery rounds fell in the town, a U.S. tank company raced down the road into it with no losses. Scarcely pausing, the tank unit moved rapidly out of the town towards the German main positions, which were expertly camouflaged in the hills.

WHAM! With a single explosion, the lead M-4 Sherman of the American tank column burst into flames. In less than the time of a heartbeat, shrieking German anti-tank shells flew past the vehicles of the startled tankers. Quickly taking cover, the U.S. tanks began to engage the German guns, most of which were not even visible to the Shermans. The tank company fired off all of its 75mm ammunition in an effort to stop the highly accurate anti-tank fire. Soon, however, they were forced to give up the unequal fight, and they pulled back into Canicatti to await more reinforcements and tank ammunition. When night fell, the Americans held the town, but not the dominating hills, skillfully defended by smaller-sized German units. On the night of 12 July, the Germans reassembled their forces, pulling back from Delia and Sommatino (where the German out-post companies had been overrun), and retreated unopposed to a new defensive position along the railroad that ran between Serradifalco and San Cataldo.

Although not apparent to the U.S. forces, the Germans had thus established a pattern of defense which best inflicted damage on the enemy and conserved their strength, and most importantly bought time for German reinforcements to be brought to Sicily. During the day, the heavily camouflaged and concealed German small units, backed-up by their own and Italian artillery, watched and waited for the Americans to launch attacks. With concentrated firepower, these offensive moves were battered and stopped. The Germans allowed the U.S. units to occupy the towns which were of little strategic value, since almost every village was dominated by the surrounding hills which they held. During the night, the German units re consolidated and reorganized their defense, often pulling back to secondary positions which had been established during the preceding evening. Thus, when the morning came, the Americans faced empty hills, and it took much time and reconnaissance on their parts to establish this fact. Their forward advance was hindered by skillfully placed mines and such booby-traps that the Germans had time to emplace. It was usually late afternoon before the weary Americans discovered the new German positions, which again used all available firepower to inflict casualties on the probing lead units, starting the defensive cycle over again. Indeed, there seemed nothing that could be done to force the pace of the attack. General Rodt and his 15. Panzer-Grenadier-Division were working defensive miracles with the limited available resources.

(To be Continued in the next issue)

# The FRENCH Char B1 Tank

by James Steuard

It was May of 1940, and the bright summer sunshine was spoiled by the rubble, wreckage and dirty smoke of war. The German Infanterie-Regiment was getting a few quick hours of rest, while an officer's conference was going on - the "Blitzkrieg" advance would soon start up again, but right now, exhausted soldiers were asleep behind an alert listening-post defense.

The morning stillness was shattered by a loud German cry from the outpost line: "Achtung . . . . Panzer!" As the infantrymen aroused themselves, a second call erupted from a nearby command post. . . . "Pak Vor!" (Anti-tank guns forward!) In response, sleepy German gunners man-handled their 3.7cm anti-tank guns to the front and got ready for action. The number one gun of the anti-tank company was rapidly pushed down the tree-covered French farm path by its crew, to a position where it looked out across the meadow. . . . but no enemy tanks were seen. The German gun crew rather looked forward to a possible fight; they had knocked-out two French light tanks in the preceding days, and French armored vehicles had proven to be no match for German Pak.

As the German gun crew was getting ready for action, the morning quiet was again broken, this time by the growl of engines and the snapping and crashing of brush. The German Unteroffizier barked an order, and the anti-tank gun was pivoted to fire at the noise. Then it happened. . . . . from out of a clump of trees and brush came a monster. . . . . a large, hulking, olive green and brown French tank! It moved, slowly and ponderously, through the brush and along the edge of the meadow, obviously looking for an enemy. "Feuer!" . . . . and at a range of 50 meters, the German anti-tank gun barked. A bright red tracer flashed out of the muzzle and across the small clearing at the slowly-moving enemy tank. There was a "clang" and the still-burning tracer arced upwards. . . a ricochet! As the huge French tank turned to directly face the gun, the German crew rapidly went through the reloading drill, preparing to fire again. The next shell would surely knock-out the tank! Again the 3.7cm gun barked, and the red tracer streaked to the heavy French vehicle. . . . . with no visible result, except that the tank's engine sped-up and the tank rumbled straight at the German gun. Another shell was fired with no result, and then the startled German gun crew dove for safety as the French heavy tank crushed the 3.7cm Pak under its tracks.

Although the above story seems impossible to have occurred during the German victorious "Blitzkrieg" of 1940, it actually took place! The ponderous, heavy French vehicle that was such a surprise to the Germans was a "Char B1" and had the French Army correctly employed these tanks the story of the French Campaign of 1940 might have had a far different ending.

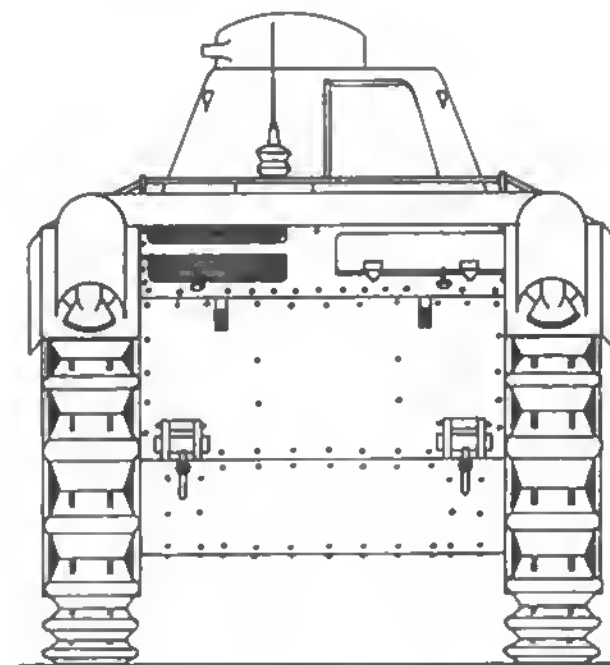
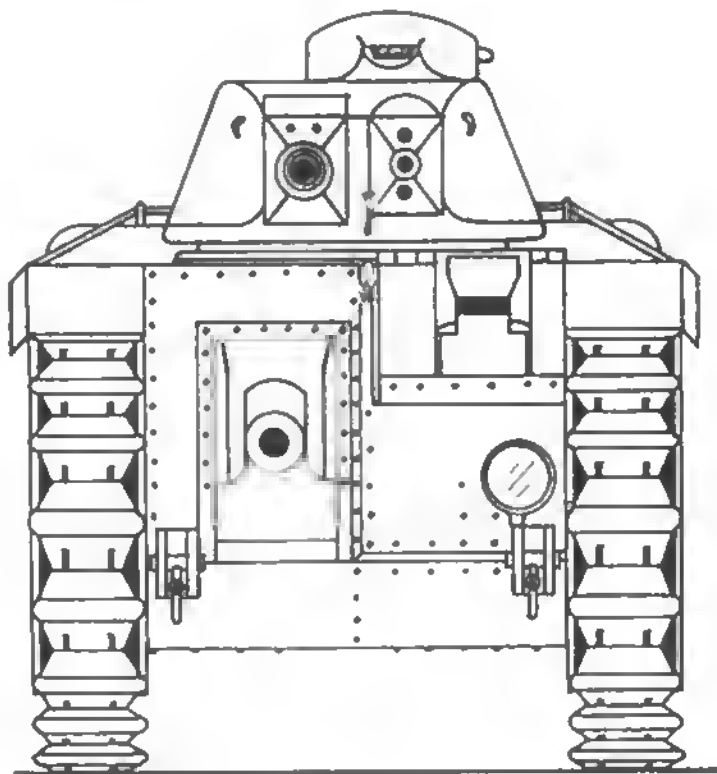
The French "Char B1" (and later "Char B1 Bis") was placed in production by the French Army in the mid-1930's, with the intent of equipping the French Armoured Divisions with this tank as their main armored weapon. By 1940, the three Divisions Cuirasses, as the armored divisions were known, were each equipped with four battalions of these heavy tanks. During this period, the Char B1 was the heaviest and most powerfully armed tank in existence (in the west) and it was more than a match for German Panzer equipment then in use. The Char B1 weighed more than 30 tons! It was armed with a hull-mounted 75mm gun, and a turret-mounted 47mm gun as well as a coaxial 7.5mm machine gun. The tank was slow, with a top speed of only 17 m.p.h., but it had an excellent cross-country performance that allowed it to go almost anywhere. The Renault 6-cylinder power-plant provided 307 horsepower, but this did not give the underpowered tank the mobility that had been originally intended! But the heavy vehicle, never-the-less, was an excellent performer in the few cases where it went into action against the Germans.

Probably the greatest drawback of this French heavy tank was its crew layout and their duties. While the design of the Char B offered numerous advanced features (such as self-sealing fuel tanks), no apparent thought was given to the operation of the tank in combat. There were four crew members in the Char B1; the Tank Commander (who occupied the small turret), the Driver-Gunner (in the front of the hull, alongside of the 75mm gun), the Loader and the Wireless Operator (stationed in the center of the tank). The Tank Commander had the impossible task of loading and firing the 47mm gun at targets successfully; impossible since he also commanded the vehicle and the crew, gave orders, and tried to control the movement of his own tank. If he was a Platoon Commander, he had the additional duties of maintaining control of other tanks also. The Driver had the job of steering and moving the tank at the order of the Tank Commander; additionally, he aimed and fired the hull-mounted 75mm gun. Since this gun had almost no traverse, the Driver-Gunner had to

pivot the tank to align the gun on its target. Thus, the Driver not only had to maneuver and steer the ponderous vehicle at the command of his Commander, but he also had to observe to the front for targets, and then he had to engage these targets by aligning the tank correctly and then firing the gun. In comparison to the Tank Commander and Driver-Gunner, the other two crew members had relatively little to do outside of their assumed duties. Both the Loader and Wireless Operator were relatively blind, in the center of the hull, without the benefit of observation periscopes or vision slits. The Loader selected the proper ammunition and loaded the 75mm rounds into the breech of the gun as soon as it had fired. He had little else to do. The Wireless Operator, on the other hand, took care of the complicated radio equipment, and he transmitted signals at the command of the Tank Commander. Radio messages were sent by the use of Morse code, tapped-out on a telegraph key.

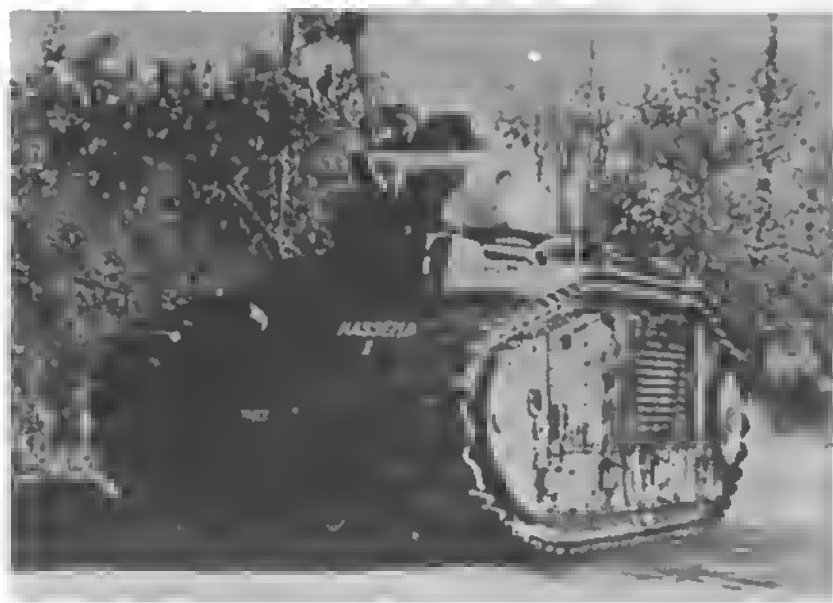
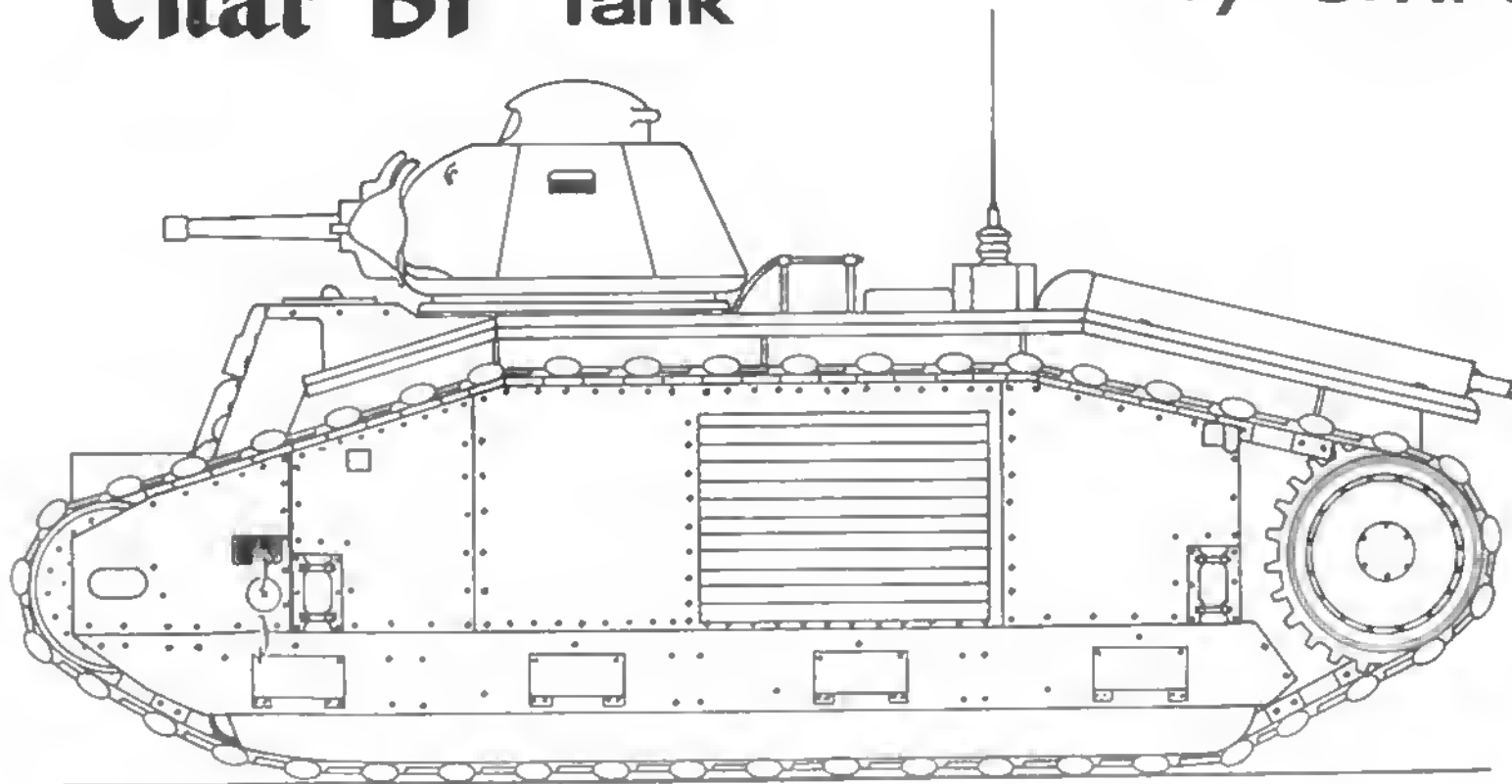
With the armor protection afforded the Char B1 tank, however, it did not really matter that two of the crew members were too overworked to fire the main weapons. The frontal armor plating of 60mm gave the tank protection from practically all anti-tank weapons of the 1940 period, except the 8.8cm Flak gun when it was employed against ground targets. The side protection of the Char B1 was equally good, and it is no wonder that German anti-tank gunners had so much trouble with this heavy French tank.

During the French Campaign, the three pre-war French Divisions Cuirasses were employed in piece-meal fashion; the tank battalions being broken-up to support various infantry formations. The only armored division that was not employed in this manner was the 4e Division, which was being formed as the campaign was in progress. This division, under the command of General DeGaulle, was not fully trained or fully equipped, but its commander knew the rudiments of armored warfare and realized that armored weapons must be used in mass to be fully effective. On May 29th, the 4e Division Cuirasse was launched in an attack on Abbeville. The initial French success was lost when the tanks encountered emplaced 8.8cm anti-aircraft guns, against which even the French heavy armor had no chance.



## The FRENCH Char B1 Tank

in 1/32 scale  
by S. R. Cobb







# ARMOR G-2

Current Data on the World's  
Armored Forces .

by J. C. Johns

IRAN: In recent purchases, Iran has bought some British-made Chieftan tanks. These vehicles have a crew of four, and mount a main armament of a 120mm BL high-velocity gun. The tank weighs 52.3 tons.

ITALY: For some time, the Italian Army has been considering modifications to its fleet of older and obsolete M-47 medium tanks that was acquired from the United States in military aid. These tanks represent a major element of the armored forces in the Italian Army, and it would be far too costly to simply eliminate these tanks in favor of more modern ones (such as the "Leopard"). The Italian Army now has under evaluation a modified M-47 medium tank, which has been re-armed with the standard NATO 105mm gun. The powerplant has been changed to the Continental AVDS 1790 diesel, which is the same engine as in the M-60 medium tank. Modifications were made to the M-47 rear hull to accommodate the larger engine and its internal exhaust system, so that apparently the upper portion of the rear deck now resembles the M-60. Additional modifications were made to the electrical and fire control systems. With these changes, the modified M-47 is said to be equal to the M-60 in performance.

ISRAEL: A new tank is under development in Israel. This tank will be named the "Sabra" and will enter service some time in 1972. It will be armed with the 105mm British L7A3 main gun, and will be powered with a United States Continental diesel engine. The tank has been designed to operate specifically in a desert environment.

NORTH KOREA: Recent news indicates that the North Korean People's Army has been re-equipped with Soviet-manufactured T-54 medium tanks, with a crew of four and a 100mm main gun. Whether the older T-34/85 medium tanks are still in use as training vehicles is not known.

PAKISTAN: The Army of Pakistan is using Chinese-manufactured T-59 medium tanks. This tank is similar to the Soviet-made T-54 and T-55 tanks, but it lacks the gun stabilization system and has hand traverse (rather than powered). Western observers seem to think that the simplification was due to training requirements; uneducated trainees can better perform in a manual system with less pieces of complicated equipment. In other aspects, the T-59 compares favorably with the T-54; it mounts a 100mm gun and has a crew of four.

SOUTH VIETNAM: The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) has had 54 ex-U.S. Army M-48A2 or M-48A3 medium tanks transferred to its armored forces. Part of these tanks are known to be out-of-service due to maintenance requirements. This is the largest tank in service with the South Vietnamese Army.

UNITED STATES: The U.S. Army has a Czech-manufactured OT-62 armored personnel carrier under test. The vehicle, which is ex-Israeli, ex-Egyptian and ex-Czech (going backwards in that order) is marked with the inscription "U.S. Army Test Vehicle".

Comments and contributions are welcomed from readers interested in information about the World's armor. Send items and comments to "AFV-G2", Attention "Armor G-2 Section".

# The Baron's Corner

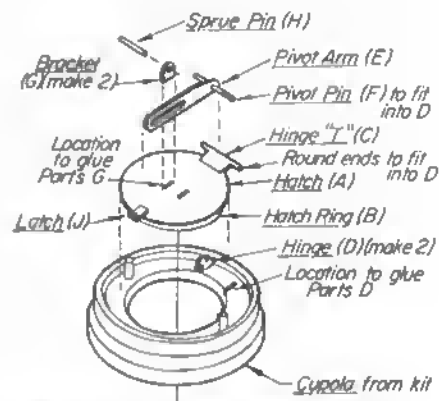
An Authentic Working Hatch for the  
Tamiya 1:35th Tiger I. Tank

by Norb Meyer

A few issues back, in a product review, we said some nasty things about the Tamiya Tiger I. tank kit, and its turret hatch. We failed to give you an alternative, as at the time we really didn't have an answer. Since then, we've worked one out.

Before we start, if you have the big brother of this tank by Tamiya (in 1:25th), then your job will be easier as it will help visualization. The first thing that must be done is to remove the old detail on the Cupola (the set of two indentations that allow the old abominal hatch to open and close). When removed, you will find that there are two square holes in the top rim of the cupola; no need to worry as these will later receive the new hinges. Let's move on to the hatch itself. The first thing to do is to use your scribe and circle template to carefully scribe-out a disc for the top part of the hatch; this should be a 9/16" diameter circle of .015 styrene. Once scribed, clean up the circle with an emery board and set aside. Now comes the tricky part! We are going to make the inside of

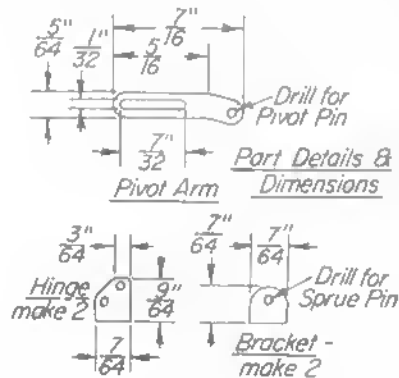
the hatch which consists of a Ring (B). We must scribe two concentric circles to make the Ring. Use .030" styrene and scribe the inside circle first; it is 15/32" in diameter. Now use the 17/32" diameter hole in the template and center it carefully over the inner circle exactly before scribing. You can see that you have very little room for error! Take your time and do it right! Cement the "O"Ring onto the Hatch that you laid aside. The next part of the assembly is to build a Hatch "T" (C); this is the part that will glue onto the Hatch and pivot in the Hinges (D). It looks like a fat "T" with the base being 5/16" wide and 1/8" high. The top bar should be 1/32" wide and 3/8" long. Make the part from .030 styrene and when you've finished it, glue it to the Hatch and allow to dry. Next we will make the most difficult parts; the Hinges (D). Start with .030 styrene and cut a strip 7/64" wide. Each Hinge is 9/64" high and shaped as shown in the "Details" drawing below. Shape the 2 necessary Hinges as shown and drill the two diagonal holes that will receive the Hatch "T"(C) and the Pivot Pin (F). After drilling these holes, go back to the "T"



Working Hatch Assembly - Tamiya 1:35th  
Tiger I. Heavy Tank

towards the inside of the Cupola when we finally get around to gluing the Hinges to the Cupola (not yet!). Next, let's make the Pivot Arm (E) that fits on top of the Hatch. Working from .030 styrene, cut a piece 7/16" long and shape it per the "Detail" drawing (below). Once the outside shape is completed (with ends rounded), three holes must be drilled. The first hole is at the very rear to accommodate the Pivot Pin (F) that will fit into the top holes in the Hinges. Next, two holes must be drilled "dead center" in the width of the Arm; one at the forward rounded end and the second 7/32" rearward from the first hole. After this is done, very carefully scribe a straight line between these two holes connecting them. This is best done with a very sharp #11 X-Acto knife blade. Continue scribing until the "line" cuts through the Arm. Now enlarge this line to form a slot by shaving carefully with the blade. The final width of the slot should be 1/32" wide. Now, make the final parts; a set of 2 Brackets (G) per the "Detail" drawings, a Sprue Pin (H) to fit into the holes in the Brackets, and the small Latch (J).

The best method of putting the Hatch Assembly together is to refer to the Exploded Assembly drawing (above) and to partially assemble the Hatch before cementing anything to the Cupola. Slip the Hinges (D) onto the ends of the Hatch "T" (C) making sure that these ends go through the bottom holes! Now glue the Pivot Pin into the Pivot Arm (E and F) and slip the ends of the Pivot Pin through the upper holes in the Hinges. Holding this whole mess together (which will take three arms!), the Hinges can be cemented to the Cupola in the two square holes. Finally, the Brackets (G) can be cemented on both sides of the Pivot Arm onto the Hatch, and the Sprue Pin (H) can be inserted through the holes in the Brackets and the slot in the Arm.



Use a heat source to flare the ends of the Sprue Pin and the Pivot Pin after assembly. The Latch (J) can be fitted now, as can be a Grab Iron to assist in opening the Hatch. I think that you will find that this new cupola assembly will add much to your model of the Tiger I. and will provide you with something that Tamiya did not; namely an authentic working hatch. . . . . Good modeling!

# Color 'n Camouflage

The M-48A2 "Patton" Tank in service with  
The West German Bundeswehr.

by James Steuard



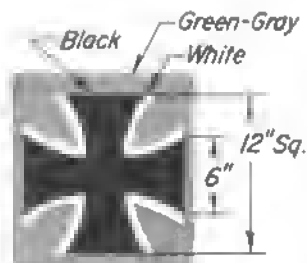
*Left Side of Turret, West German Bundeswehr M-48A2*

The M-48 series of medium tanks went into service with the Bundeswehr in the late 1950's, and the M-48, M-48A1 and M-48A2 have become important weapons that were only supplanted by the Leopard tank developed by

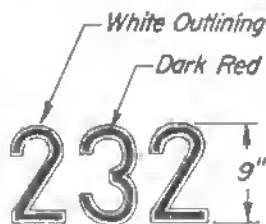
West German technology. Even today, M-48A2's equip the Panzer- and Panzergrenadier-Divisions of one of the three German Corps. The subject of this month's article is such a M-48A2 of the 3, Panzer-Division, which was in use during the middle 1960's.

Armored vehicles of the Bundeswehr are painted in an overall scheme of Green-Gray paint, as indicated by the paint chip below. This color seems to be a good compromise for concealment and also for long wear. Even though the color differs from batch to batch, the color shown below is typical of that in current Bundeswehr usage, and is the overall paint scheme that our M-48A2 appeared in.

All West German armored vehicles are primarily identified by National Identification markings to indicate the country of origin. This takes the form of a twelve-inch high black Maltese cross with white outside edging on the curved portions of the cross arms. Early identification markings had white edging which completely surrounded the crosses, but this was later changed to a pattern somewhat similar to that of the World War II. Luftwaffe. These crosses on M-48's are applied to the forward sides of the turret immediately below the front part of the turret hand (or foot) rails, in a position where they can be seen from the front of the vehicle as well as the sides.



*West German National Marking*



*Vehicle Identification Numbers*

The sole other turret markings consist of a three-digit vehicle identification number, which outwardly appears similar to that used on World War II. German armored vehicles. These numbers are approximately nine-inches high and have a dark red (sometimes black, or even in the green-gray vehicle color) center completely outlined in white, as shown on the left. These numbers were painted on the sides of the turret at the rear, immediately below the turret hand rail. It does not appear that these numbers follow the same pattern as that of the older Wehrmacht. While the initial number seems to indicate the vehicle's Company, the remaining two digits do not appear to have any Platoon or individual vehicle significance. In Panzer-Grenadier-Brigades, which have one tank battalion, vehicles are numbered in the 200, 300 and 400 series (the 1st Company is the Headquarters Company). In Panzer-Brigades, which have two battalions, one battalion is numbered as above, while the other battalion has vehicles numbered in the 600, 700, and 800 series, even though the battalions have different designations. This has been apparently done as a recognition device.

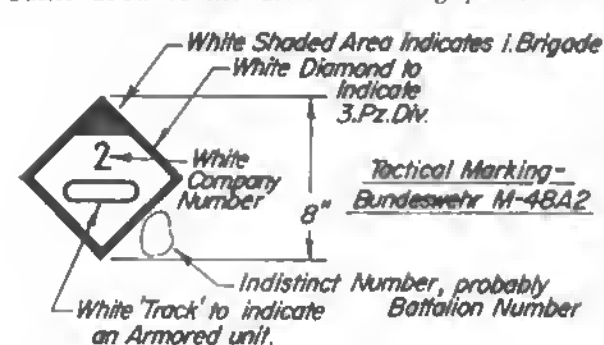
In common with all Bundeswehr vehicles, M-48's are identified by License Plates, which are painted on the front and the rear of tanks. In the front, the usual location for this License is centered on the hull front, half-way between the front edge of the hull and the driver's hatch front. In some cases, the License has appeared offset to the right (as facing the vehicle) beneath the headlights. On the rear of the tank, this License is painted on the left rear fender where visible to the rear. Both License Plates are identical, being from 23 to 24-inches long and 4-inches high. They are painted in white

BUNDESWEHR
GREEN-GRAY
10 pts Floquil RR82 Concrete
5 pts Floquil RR45 Pullman Green
1 pt Floquil M46 Dark Green

with a thin black outline. On the left of the plate appears a small rectangle divided vertically into three parts. This rectangle is painted in the West German national colors; black/red/yellow. On the right of this symbol appears the letter "Y" (which is used on all Bundeswehr vehicles) and a six digit number to identify the vehicle completely. The numbers on all M-48's appear to start with either a "6" or a "7", with the latter number now coming into more usage on the converted "A3's" which are now supplanting the older "A2's". Our particular M-48A2 bore the numbers "Y-614557", painted as shown on the right.

The only other marking that appeared on our M-48A2 tank was a rather complicated Tactical Marking, which was painted on the left front fender flap so that it was visible to the front. This Tactical Marking is a simplified version of the standard Tactical Marking system that was in effect in the Bundeswehr from 1956 until 1967. In this system, units and positions within these units are indicated by a mixture of numbers and geometric shapes. The most prominent part of the marking system as it was applied to the M-48A2 was a white outline diamond, approximately eight-inches high. This diamond, painted in white, indicates that the tank is a part of the Bundeswehr's 3. Panzer-Division, headquartered at Buxtehude as a part of the I. German Corps. Had this symbol been a circle, or in other colors, it would have indicated other divisions within the new German Army. Next, the top part of the white outlined diamond was painted white, as shown in shading on the drawing below (for clarity). This painted area, in white, signified that the M-48A2 was assigned to the division's 1. Brigade; the other two Brigades were indicated by the same area of the diamond being painted either red or yellow. If this area of the diamond was not

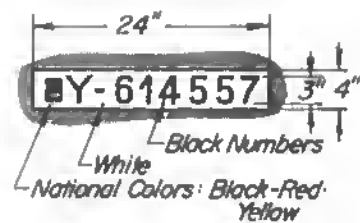
painted, then the vehicle was from one of the units assigned directly under divisional control. Beneath the diamond on the right side appeared a number (Indistinct in our photographs) that probably indicated the Panzer-Bataillon that was assigned to the 1. Brigade. In this application, this number was a variation away from the standard marking system, in that normally the battalion was indicated by the color of the symbols appearing inside of the diamond. Within the white diamond appeared a white elongated horizontal oval which is the standard NATO symbol for an armored unit. This symbol, of course, varied for the



basic type of unit that the vehicle belonged to; for example, a solid circle indicates an artillery unit, a horizontal "E" (with legs pointing downward) indicates an engineer unit, etc. Above this oval symbol appeared a white number to indicate the Company that the M-48A2 was assigned to; in this case the number "2" for the 2. Kompanie. This complete symbol thus indicates that our M-48A2 belonged to the 2. Kompanie of an unspecified Panzer-Bataillon (the number was not clear) and that the battalion was assigned as a part of the 1. Brigade of the 3. Panzer-Division of the Bundeswehr. It does not appear that this tactical marking was applied to the rear of the tank; if it was, the marking was probably applied to the right rear fender so that it was visible to the rear.

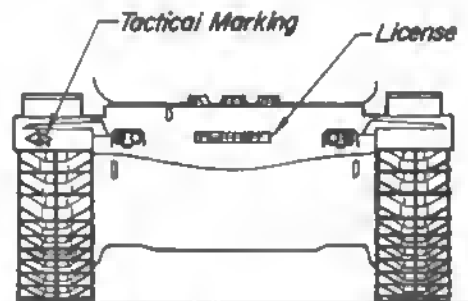
During the middle 1960's (when the photographs were taken from which this article was written), the I. Corps of the Bundeswehr was stationed in northern Germany, with the Corps Headquarters at Münster. The Corps consisted of four divisions and associated Corps troops; in addition to the 3. Panzer-Division at Buxtehude, there was the 1. Panzergrenadier-Division at Hannover, the 6. Panzergrenadier-Division at Neumünster and the 11. Panzergrenadier-Division at Oldenburg. (As a note, there are only twelve divisions in the Bundeswehr (as of this period) and they were numbered irrespective of the type of unit; these divisions are assigned to the three Corps of the Bundeswehr.)

The author would like to correspond with other individuals who are interested in vehicles, units and markings that are used by the Bundeswehr; such correspondence could lead to a more definitive article on markings systems in use.



Painted License Plates

assigned directly under divisional control. Beneath the diamond on the right side appeared a number (Indistinct in our photographs) that probably indicated the Panzer-Bataillon that was assigned to the 1. Brigade. In this application, this number was a variation away from the standard marking system, in that normally the battalion was indicated by the color of the symbols appearing inside of the diamond. Within the white diamond appeared a white elongated horizontal oval which is the standard NATO symbol for an armored unit. This symbol, of course, varied for the



Simplified Hull Front View - Bundeswehr M-48A2, showing marking locations



Book Review: The Churchill Tank, by Peter Chamberlain and Chris Ellis (Arms and Armour Press, London, England, 1971, \$6.95)

Review by William Platz

What the study of British armour did not need was another book on the Churchill tank! Indeed, the Churchill has been covered in a multitude of sources, which are widely available (AFV Profile, Bellona Military Prints, the Airfix Magazine series by the same authors, etc.). However, while most of it has been said before, Chamberlain and Ellis have put it all together (again) in one volume and their coverage of the subject is excellent.

The Churchill Tank consists of 48 pages of text and a further 50 pages of photographs of the multitude of variations of Churchills. Additionally, there are six Appendices with tabular data (including a partial listing of W. D. numbers). A heavy emphasis is placed on design and development, and on the special-purpose variants, while little is said concerning the Churchill's combat employment and effectiveness against the enemy. The technical coverage is outstanding, with numerous photographs to illustrate specific details and modifications. The arrangement of these photographs is the one major criticism that I have. Most of these pictures are placed in the rear of the volume, where they form almost a complete second book. Although they are referenced in the text, the photographs lose much of their value as illustrations when it is necessary to thumb through the last half of the book to find them. (A process hampered by the fact that the references are given by "Plate Number" rather than the page number where the photograph can be found.)

Overall, The Churchill Tank is an excellent reference work, and it is well worth the cost to a British armour buff. I only wish that someone would provide the same coverage for the Valentine tank, and maybe even the Crusader.

## The Baron's Bibliography

Starting with this issue, during the next several months, the Baron's Bookshelf will devote about one half of its content to a bibliography of books on armored warfare. It is the intent to list not only the books in English and in print, but also to list available works that are out-of-print and in other languages. We are launching this bibliography as a result of various requests from readers, and we will need reader response and help to enable us to make this bibliography truly comprehensive. The bibliography will be done in sections, each section covering either a subject area or a military campaign, and starting with the North African Desert Campaign of 1940-1943 (per reader requests). Following each book listing, which will indicate the title, author and publisher (if known), there will be a short summary or indication of the book's content. If the publication is available in multiple editions, including paperback, we will attempt to list these with appropriate abbreviations. In using this bibliography, readers are referred to the book dealers who advertise "search service for out-of-print books" as these dealers will probably be of great assistance in obtaining rare out-of-print and foreign language books on armor. Since the bibliography will not be in alphabetical order (due to reader response and other factors), we suggest that a file card system be kept on each book, so that the filing order can be changed as needed, listing those books which might be of special interest. The bibliography listings will be numbered for later references in supplemental form. Remember, reader help would be greatly appreciated.

Abbreviations: IP - In Print; OP - out-of-print; HB - hard bound; PB - paperback, pp. - pages; MS - Manuscript; ill. - illustrations.

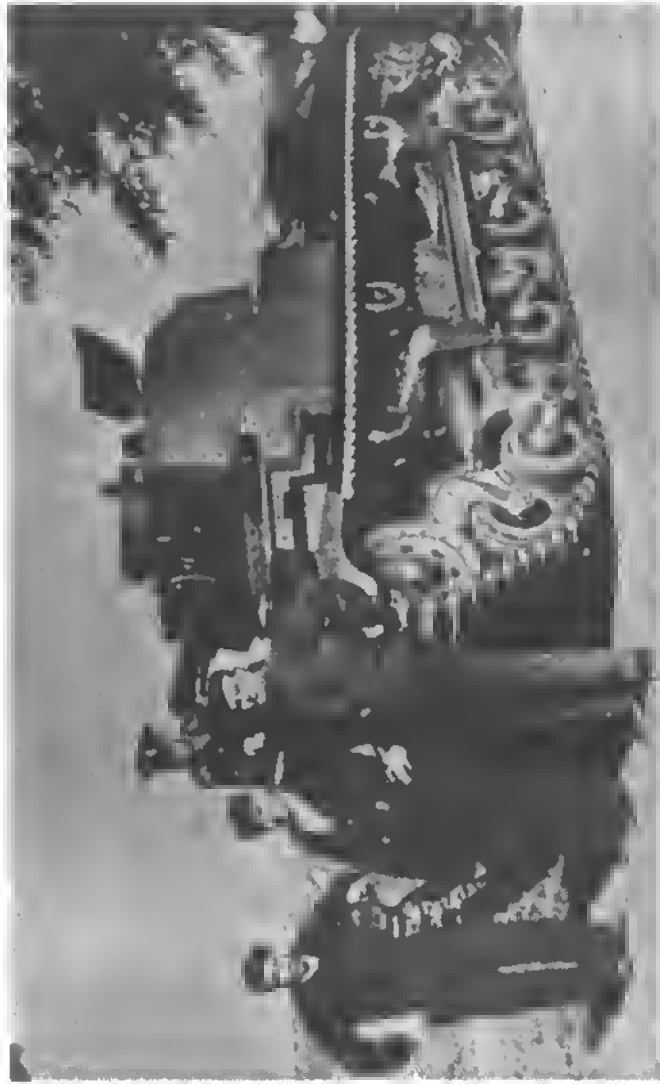
- Continued on Page 30 -

# CZECHOSLOVAK ARMOR;

## A Return Look

The V-8-H Medium Tank (at right) was produced in small numbers by CKD. It is interesting to note the close similarity of the running gear with that of the LT Vz. 35 (shown lower right), which was manufactured by Skoda. The V-8-H mounted a Skoda 4.7cm gun and two Vz. 37 machine guns. The tank pictured appears to be a test vehicle with its test crew.

The Czechoslovak TNHP Light Tank (Photo below): The tank in the photo is apparently either a very early production vehicle or one of the test pre-production series. While mounting the standard Skoda 3.7cm gun, the two machine guns are the light air-cooled Vz. 28 types which were used before the Vz. 37 became available. The rounded turret front differs from the production turrets which had either a mantlet or a square front plate. Also note the straight driver's front plate and the early dish-type road wheels, which were later modified during production.



The LT Vz. 35 Light Tank (shown below) was the standard tank of the Czechoslovak Army during the mobilization period of September 1938, as the LT Vz. 38 had not reached troops in any numbers. The Skoda-built LT Vz. 35 shown in the photo appears to be in the standard Czech camouflage scheme of this period, and it mounts the Skoda 3.7cm gun and two machine guns of 7.92mm caliber. While complicated, this tank served well into 1942 with the German Wehrmacht, as tanks, supply vehicles and mortar carriers.





# Wargame Review

A Move and Fire Regime for  
Armor Miniatures - Part II.  
by Lenard Lakofka

In the previous issue, we covered the three types of tank orders involving firing by single-shot vehicles (Fire and Move; Move, Fire and Move; and Move and Fire). Now in Part II., we will cover those orders concerned with optional firing situations and "Multiple Shot" vehicles. As in Part I., these rules assume an alternating regime of movement. (For a complete set of Mr. Lakofka's rules, the reader is referred to International Wargamer magazine where they have appeared in a serialized version. . . . . Ed.)

## ORDERS FOR "SINGLE-SHOT" VEHICLES (Cont'd)

### IV. Move and Scan (MS) Option

- A. Write down your MS Option, but do not indicate your proposed Scan Area.
- B. You Move First (YMF) Situation: Move your vehicle, then turn its turret as per the turret traverse limitations set forth in Part I. Then select a 4-inch wide segment of land along and perpendicular to your aiming line - this can include a target already on the board, a forest, building, opening between cover, or whatever. If your opponent moves into this Scan Area and remains there, you may fire at him. Likewise, if fire comes from your Scan Area, you may return it immediately. If neither situation occurs, you lose your fire for that turn.
- C. You Move Second (YMS) Situation: Move your vehicle and outline your Scan Area. Since your opponent has already moved, only those tanks now in your Scan Area (but invisible during the opposition's movement) shall be spotted on the board, and you may fire at these or at the source of any fire that you receive from the Scan Area.

### V. Hold and Guard (HG) Option

- A. Write down your HG order.
- B. YMF Situation: Turn your turret and outline a sector of guard accordingly. Guard Sectors may be up to 8-inches wide. If an opponent moves into your Guard Sector, you may fire at once; and if his vehicle is destroyed or disabled it loses its fire. Of course, you can react to fire from your Guard Sector as in the Scan Option above.
- C. YMS Situation: Before your opponent moves and after orders are written down by both sides, turn your turret and outline your Guard Sector. React as before to movement or fire from the sector immediately.

### VI. Hold and Track (HT) Option

- A. Select and write down the target to be tracked. It must be visible to your vehicle and you may not subsequently switch targets.
- B. If your target moves, you may fire at once. If it remains in place, you may fire at it after ALL movement has been completed.

NOTE: Single-shot vehicles cannot order a Move and Fire (or a Hold and Guard, Hold and Track or Move and Scan Situation, when this results in firing at the end of a turn) followed by a Fire and Move order. This would require two shots in a row, with zero loading time!

## ORDERS FOR "MULTIPLE-SHOT" VEHICLES

### I. Move, Fire and Fire (MFF)

- A. Write down your target, as in a MF situation. You may fire your second shot at any target within 2-inches of the original that might be visible due to his or your own move.
- B. You may only move 1/2 or less of your normal movement. A longer move will cancel the second shot.

### II. Fire, Move and Fire (FMF)

- A. Treat your first shot as a Fire and Move, and the second shot as a Move and Fire.

### III. Fire, Move and Scan (FMS)

- A. Treat your first shot as a Fire and Move, and the remainder as a Move and Scan.

### IV. Move, Fire and Scan (MFS)

- A. Treat the first shot as a Move and Fire situation; then you may scan 2-inches to both sides of the original target for hidden targets or fire.
- B. You may only move 1/2 or less of your maximum movement distance.

# AFV INQUIRY

Armor Question from Readers, with  
Answers from the AFV-G2 Staff.

**QUESTION:** What is the function of the "Muzzle Brake" that is found on most late World War II tanks and assault guns? Can you show me a clear photograph of the "standard" German "Muzzle Brake" using during 1944-1945.

**ANSWER:** The function of a tank "Muzzle Brake" is twofold. First, this piece of equipment functions as a "Blast Deflector" (and this is probably a better name for it) to channel the escaping propellant gas to the sides of the guntube as the projectile exits. Without such a device, flying dust and dirt would certainly obscure the gunner's observation of the flight of the projectile (visible through a "tracer") or the strike of the shot on the target. Secondly, a "Muzzle Brake" serves to reduce recoil on the gun system. As velocities of tank weapons were increased during 1943-1945, the resulting recoil became damaging to the gun system, and it became necessary to compensate for this violent recoil shock. The "Muzzle Brake" does this by channeling the escaping propellant gases so as to counter the recoil (ie. slightly backward to exert a forward thrust).

German "Muzzle Brakes" took several forms during the late war years, from the early ball-style (found on the Panzer IV, Ausführung F2) to the multiple-slot style used on some artillery in 1945. The "double-baffle" type appeared in larger numbers that did other kinds, and this might be considered somewhat "standard" during 1944. The sizes of this style of device differed on the 7.5cm, the 7.62cm and the 9.8cm weapons, of course. The two photographs (at right) are of the "Muzzle Brake" installation found on the German 7.5cm Pak 40 anti-tank gun, and can be considered typical of those 7.5cm armed armored vehicles. In this case, the gun is mounted on the early version of the "Marder III," self-propelled gun.

**Editor's Note:** If sufficient reader interest is available, we can provide accurate scale drawings of this "Muzzle Brake". Please let us know if this would be of interest.





The U. S. Army Medium Tank Company of 1944

by Jamea Steuard

By mid-1943, combat experience had indicated that the medium tank was to be the critical and dominant armored vehicle in the coming invasion of Europe. The light tank (either M-3 or M-5) with its small gun and light armor, although fast and maneuverable, was proven to be inadequate in the face of larger German guns and heavier tanks, and it was on its way out. On October 27, 1943, a War Department order, titled "Reorganization of Tank Battalions" came into effect; this order changed the look of armored units for the rest of the war. Prior to this date, Tank Battalions had existed in two patterns, "Light" and "Medium", each equipped with the type of tanks designated by the title. Under the reorganization, "Light" and "Medium" Battalions were merged into a single type of unit that combined both light and medium tanks. Thus, by the time of the Allied invasion of Normandy, all U.S. Army Tank Battalions, either divisional or separate, were organized with the following companies:

- Headquarters and Headquarters Company
- Service Company
- "A" Company (Medium Tanks)
- "B" Company (Medium Tanks)
- "C" Company (Medium Tanks)
- "D" Company (Light Tanks)

The three medium tank equipped companies of the Tank Battalion were organized and equipped as shown on the following page, with a small Headquarters Section, three Medium Tank Platoons, a Maintenance Section and an Administrative, Mess and Supply Section. For personnel, it contained 5 officers, sometimes 1 warrant officer, and 112 enlisted men. It was provided with 17 medium tanks (shown opposite as 75mm M-4's, although generally by the end of 1944, there were M-4's equipped with the 76mm gun in each company), two 1/4-ton "Jeeps", one M-3 Halftrack, one M-32 Tank Retriever, and two 2-1/2 ton Trucks, in addition to four Trailers.

The Headquarters Section had two M-4 tanks and one 1/4-ton "Jeep". In combat, the Company Commander used an M-4 tank as his command post; the second tank was sometimes used as a vehicle for an attached Artillery Forward Observer. The "Jeep" was used by the Commander when his unit was not involved in combat, for liaison and for convenience of travel. When there was no Artillery Observer attached, the second M-4 was used in its normal role to form a small tank section with the Company Commander's tank. Some tank battalions favored the British policy of providing 105mm howitzer armed tanks in the Headquarters Section for fire support, while others attempted to organize the Headquarters Section with two Bulldozer-blade equipped tanks (and these 2 policies became standardized in the 1950 style Tank Company).

The three Tank Platoons were identically organized, with five medium tanks. The Platoon was designed to be split into two combat elements, or sections, as required by the situation. The Platoon Leader, normally a 2nd Lieutenant, commanded the entire platoon and moved with the larger three-tank section, while the smaller tank section was commanded by the Platoon Sergeant. Commonly, the smaller section supported the movement of the larger section, acting as a base-of-fire.

The Tank Company Maintenance Section was led by the Company's Executive Officer, who doubled as the Motor Officer. It had three vehicles; a 1/4-ton Jeep for the officer, a M-3 Halftrack pulling a 1-ton trailer to carry personnel and repair equipment, and a M-32 Tank Retriever which was used to retrieve, or move disabled tanks from the combat area to a covered position for repair. If the damage was too extensive for the Maintenance Section to repair, the damaged vehicle was normally evacuated to rear-area Ordnance units, which had more sophisticated repair facilities.

The Administrative, Mess and Supply Section was commanded by the Company First Sergeant, and it normally was with the Tank Company only when the unit was not in combat. When the company was involved in fighting, this section was attached to the Tank Battalion's rear echelon. As indicated by the title, the section was organized to provide three functions, and it was provided with two trucks, each towing a trailer. The Administrative vehicle carried the First Sergeant and his personnel section, as well as the Supply Sergeant and his "empire". The second vehicle carried the Mess personnel and equipment. In some cases, the Tank Company had an assigned Warrant Officer, who acted as a Personnel specialist to handle the company's records and personnel. This section also contained a small "filler" or replacement section to provide trained tank crewmen to replace casualties in the Tank Platoons.

All-in-all, as a product of much modification, the Medium Tank Company was an effective and well-organized unit to "forge the thunderbolt" of offensive armored combat.

U.S. ARMY MEDIUM TANK COMPANY circa 1944

HEADQUARTERS SECTION



1 NCO Comm. Chief  
1 EM Bugler-Driver



1 NCO Tank Commander  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver

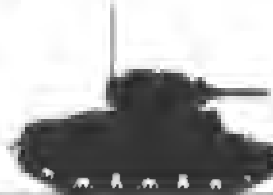


1 OFF Company Commander  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver

FIRST PLATOON



1 NCO Tank Commander  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver



1 NCO Tank Commander  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver



1 OFF Platoon Leader  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver



1 NCO Tank Commander  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver



1 NCO Platoon Sergeant  
1 EM Gunner  
1 EM Loader  
1 EM Bow Gunner  
1 EM Driver

SECOND PLATOON & THIRD PLATOON are Identical to First Platoon.

MAINTENANCE SECTION



1 NCO Vehicle Commander  
1 EM Mechanic-Armorer  
1 EM Driver



1 NCO Motor Sergeant  
1 EM Mechanic-Armorer  
5 EM Tank Mechanics  
1 EM Auto Mechanic-Driver



1 OFF Executive Officer  
1 EM Radio Repairman-Driver

ADMINISTRATIVE, MESS & SUPPLY SECTION



1 NCO Mess Steward  
4 EM Cooks  
1 EM Food Handler-Driver



1 NCO First Sergeant  
1 NCO Supply Sergeant  
1 EM Company Clerk  
6 EM Replacements  
1 EM Driver

That ancient Chinese proverb has never been more true, yet in many cases, a wealth of data is overlooked or ignored simply because it is not in the form of the written word. Photographs are invaluable in the study of recent military history; however, if they are to be utilized fully, there are a few tricks of the trade that must be mastered. Each picture must be examined carefully, first to determine what you are looking at, and then to fit what there is into a framework of accumulated data. This examination should be based on a series of questions: 1) Where was the photograph taken? 2) What is the date of the photograph? 3) Who are the people pictured? 4) Any vehicles shown, and if so, what unit are they from? 5) Who took the photograph?

While at first glance, finding the answer to these may seem an insurmountable problem, in reality, it is often simply a matter of careful analysis. The location can often be determined by the background geography, coupled with vehicle camouflage and/or a unit marking. Occasionally, a road sign will appear and make this whole process easy. One word of caution: NEVER accept a photograph caption without first checking it yourself; in fact, as a rule of thumb, all captions are to be ignored unless the source of the photo is known, and the same person who took the photograph wrote the caption. It is far better to be able to confirm an author's caption after your own study, than to be led astray by erroneous data.

After you have the location pinned-down, it is not too difficult to determine the approximate data. If Sherman tanks are pictured near the town of Caen in Normandy, then the date is pretty well established as the summer of 1944. The type of vehicle is often a good clue also, as certain models were introduced after a given date. This is particularly helpful in the case of the North African Campaign of World War II, where the fighting flowed over the same area during several years.

Identification of individuals in a photograph is not as hard as it would seem. Uniform insignia will provide a good start, and if this is not visible, vehicle markings will give you an approximate idea. It is here that a knowledge of the various marking systems used by each army becomes invaluable, as different units may often be discovered by the minor alterations in color, or position of markings. If you are able to identify a group of people as belonging to a particular company of a certain regiment, you are doing well. Identification of specific vehicles should be approached in the same way, using markings and insignia.

Who took the photograph is an item of information more important than you would normally expect. Most photos of military equipment have to pass a censor at least once, and often they suffer from the experience. If, however, you have a German photograph of a British vehicle, the chances are pretty fair that the markings have not been retouched or obliterated. It should also be remembered that photographs require a photographer, and that photographers seldom take only a single picture of a given subject. If you are careful and patient (not to mention lucky), you can often find other photographs of the same subject, each adding another piece of data. If you have any doubts, let me mention that the Color 'n Camouflage article that appeared in last month's issue was based on two photographs of the same vehicle (both mis-captioned), which appeared in two separate publications, published in two different countries.

#### Swanning into the Blue; British Armoured Cars in "Crusader" (Continued from Page 7).

day in the campaign. The "Sunday of the Dead" was indeed well-named.

Monday, November 24th dawned clear and bright. Scattered across the desert in small groups of 1 or 2 vehicles, the armoured car screen slowly began to reform. Meanwhile, the German armor, also somewhat dispersed, sorted itself out and began to "pursue" the defeated British back into Egypt. Unfortunately for the Axis, the troops they were pursuing consisted of Eighth Army H.Q. units, RAF ground parties and all those units that in the normal course of events are assured a safe billet far behind the lines. The resulting "Flap" resembled a buffalo stampede and provided a source of amusement to the weary veterans of the armoured brigades.

4th South African armoured cars were camped at Gabr Saleh and had spent the morning getting in some much needed maintenance on their Marmon-Herringtons. Suddenly, at about 1130 hours, firing was heard to the northwest. The regiment stowed their tools and deployed, as a group of Stuart tanks appeared, backing towards their position and firing to the west. In moments, Lt. Col. Newton-King's Regimental Headquarters was enveloped in thick clouds of dust and fleeing soft-skin vehicles. Machine gun flashes erupted from the cloud as the pursuers opened fire. The South Africans returned the fire with the Vickers guns mounted in their turrets. Fortunately for the armoured cars, the main body passed them by, and pursuer and pursued vanished to the east, taking their dust cloud with them.

Product Review: The Fujimi 1:76th Scale Tiger II Kit by Norb Meyer

This little beauty is one of two new kit releases from "those wonderful folks" at Fujimi. The truth is that it's their best kit to date, and presents some much-needed competition to Airfix. There are some inaccuracies in the kit though; some can be corrected but some cannot. For example, the front drive sprockets have every tooth; they should have only every-other to be correct (the extras can easily be trimmed off). The tracks have the drive-sprocket holes centered; instead, these should be offset. There is no point in belaboring these problems further; the kit is very well done on detail, and in that respect, our hats are off to Fujimi. The fit of the parts is something else again! In assembly, there are several areas that must be watched for. The first is the fit of the turret top to the bottom. In order to get a good fit here, it is necessary to make a lip, with a file, on the top portion of the turret bottom. Otherwise, when the front plates of the turret is fitted on, the bottom hangs down noticeably. The next area of rather poor fit is the hull top to the sides and bottom of the tank. In order to get a good fit here at both front and back, it is necessary to do two things. First, sand the sides of the rear back plate (part #15) to conform to the inside angles of the hull top (part #4); next, two pieces of .015 plastic must be fitted to the sides of part #15 for the two pieces to fit flush together. Once you have done this, the hull top can be cemented to the bottom assembly, but, and here is the rub, the entire assembly has to be "squished down" slightly and held until the glue dries for the fit to be perfect. One word of special caution - when trimming the flash off of the kit, be very careful! This is especially true around the ball mount machine gun opening and the ball mount on the turret for the main armament (part #16). The plastic that Fujimi uses is very soft, and trims all-too-easily with a sharp blade (and you may trim off too much if care is not taken).

All-in-all, the kit must be seen to be believed, and it is quite complicated for the size of 1:76th. Fujimi must be congratulated for the inclusion of English instructions! With a lot of care and work, a very fine kit can be transformed into an excellent addition to your museum of armor. One last word; the kit is NOT for the beginner, but rather for what I would call the more advanced modeler.

Product Review "Dunkirk" by Guidon Games by Bill Platz

The Campaign in France in the summer of 1940 has long been an area neglected in wargaming. However, this condition has now come to an end - at least for those interested in Battle Games of the type made popular by the Avalon Hill Company. Guidon Games has produced "Dunkirk"; a board game covering the entire western campaign of 1940. While lacking the physical polish of Avalon Hill's offerings, "Dunkirk" is well put together. The map board is accurate, the Order-of-Battle is well researched and the rules are clear and understandable. One of the unique features of "Dunkirk" is its rule book, which explains the reasons behind the various regulations, and outlines the situations that they are designed to duplicate. These sections are clearly marked in the text so that they can be skimmed over when looking for a particular rule. The unit counters themselves are also handled in a novel way, with combat factors printed on both sides. This eliminates the need for substitute counters, and allows units to be reduced in strength rather than totally destroyed in limited combat.

The greatest problem with "Dunkirk" is the length of time that it takes to set-up (primarily due to the large number of units involved, and the need to place each Allied unit in a specific location). This problem is partially compensated for by the provisions in the rules for shortened game versions but even these take a while to set-up. The game length is another problem. "Dunkirk" is not a game to be played in a single evening, unless you have plenty of "midnight oil" to burn. The mapboard itself is TWICE the size of that used in Avalon Hill's "Stalingrad"! Yet, the game is enjoyable and is at its best as a team contest with 4 or 5 players. Price for "Dunkirk" is \$7.50, plus \$1.00 for postage. It is available from Guidon Games, P.O. Box 1123-G2, Evansville, Indiana 44713.

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## North African Desert

1940 - 1943

1. Carell, Paul; The Foxes of the Desert; the Story of the Afrika-Korps (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, NY, 1st Ed. -1961, 370pp., 56 ill.)(Macdonald & Co. Ltd., London, England, 1st Ed. -1960) HB-IP, PB-IP

Probably the book which got most readers interested in the Afrikakorps, this book originally appeared in German (as indicated below). Carell suffers from a lack of detail, and the translation seems to add to the problems; however, the book reads well and it makes for good arm-chair entertainment. The Foxes should probably be considered as a basic book on the DAK.

- 1a. Carell, Paul; Die Wüstenfüchse (Henry Nannen Verlag, Germany, 1st Ed. -1958, 2nd Ed. -1961) HB-IP
2. Alman, Karl; Ritterkreuzträger des Afrikakorps (Erich Pabel Verlag, Rastatt, Germany, 1968, 278pp., 37 ill.) HB-IP

In German, this book takes an in-depth look at 17 Knight's Cross winners of the Afrikakorps, from General to Private. In the appendix, there is a complete listing of all Knight's Cross winners of the DAK. There is also an extensive bibliography. The book tells the story of 17 men in detail and presents much information not previously available in English. The photos are especially good.

- To be continued next issue -

### Wargame Review (Continued from Page 24)

#### V. Move and Scan (MS)

- A. Your movement must be 1/2 of maximum or less to allow two shots. Targets 1 and 2 may be up to 4-inches apart if, and only if both are in the Scan Area.

#### VI. Hold and Guard (HG)

- A. Same as for Single Shot Vehicles. Two different targets may be fired on if they are within 4-inches of each other and both are within the Guard Area.

#### VII. Hold and Track (HT)

- A. Same as for Single Shot Vehicles, except that both shots must be on the same target.

### Swanning into the Blue (Continued from Page 28).

Meanwhile, a few miles to the northwest, the 11th Hussars were gathering together their far-flung Squadrons. November 25th was spent in relative quiet, while "B" Squadron provided cover for the tank recovery parties of 22nd Armoured Brigade. Axis troops were also engaged in similar activities in the same area, and several sharp encounters developed. At the end of the day, however, the tally stood at 70 tanks salvaged by the 22nd Armoured Brigade, while Panzer-Regiment 5, reported 15 repairable tanks left on the field on the 24th, and subsequently lost.

The following day, 2nd New Zealand Division linked up with 32nd Army Tank Brigade (with "C" Squadron of the K. D. G., attached) of the Tobruk garrison. The Siege of Tobruk was over, but the fighting was not. For the next two weeks, scattered fighting continued as the two exhausted opponents struck out at each other. The issue, however, had already been decided. On December 8th, the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Axis army began its withdrawal, harassed by the ever-persistent screen of British armoured cars, snapping at their heels.

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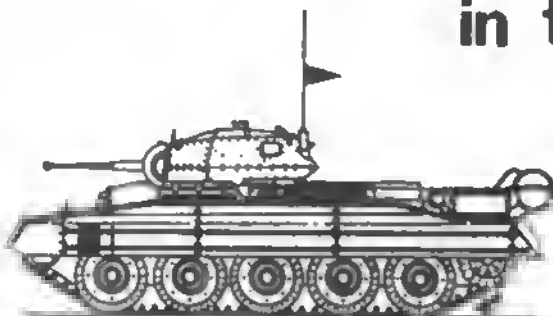
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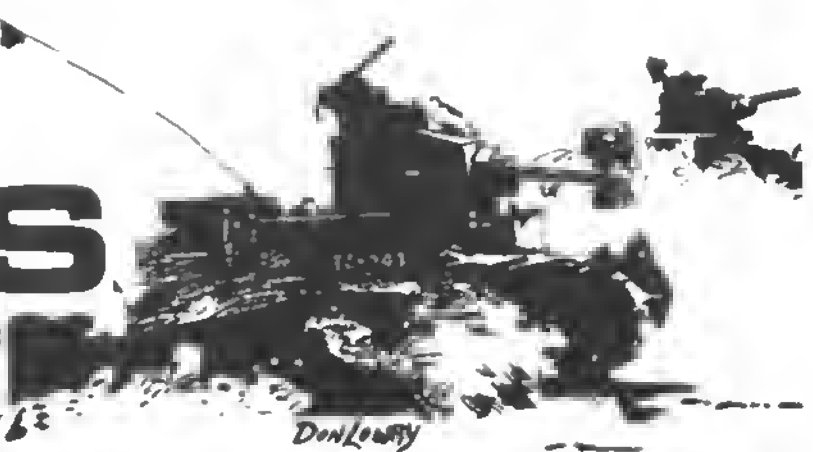
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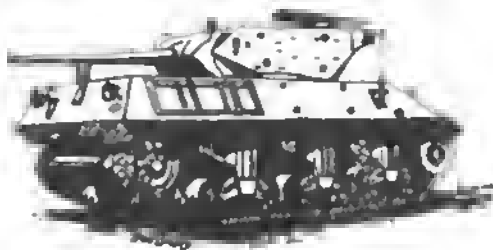
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